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THE

WORKS

OF THE

REV. JOHN WESLEY.

VOLUME XI.

Containing

SIXTEEN SERMONS,

AND

TRACTS ON VARIOUS SUBJECTS.

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SERMON CXX.

ON WORLDLY FOLLY.

LUKE XII. 20.

"*But God said unto him, Thou Fool!*"

BUT one of these fools is commonly wiser in his own eyes than seven men that can render a reason. If it were possible for a Christian, for one that has the mind which was in Christ, to despise any one, he would cordially despise those, who suppose *they are the men*, and wisdom shall die with them! You may see one of these painted to the life, in the verses preceding the text. "The ground of a certain rich man," says our blessed Lord, "brought forth plenteously," ver. 17, &c. "And he reasoned within himself, saying, What shall I do? for I have no room where to bestow my fruits. And he said, This will I do, I will pull down my barns, and build greater, and there will I bestow all my goods and my fruits. And I will say to my soul, 'Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years: take thy ease; eat, drink, and be merry;' but God said unto him, Thou fool!" I propose, by the assistance of God,

I. To open and explain these few Words, and,

II. To apply them to your Consciences.

I. 1. To open and explain them. A little before, our Lord had been giving a solemn caution to one who spoke to him about "dividing his inheritance." "Beware of

covetousness: for the life of a man," that is, the happiness of it, "does not consist in the abundance of the things that he possesseth." To prove and illustrate this weighty truth, our Lord relates this remarkable story. It is not improbable, it was one that had lately occurred, and that was fresh in the memory of some that were present. "The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plenteously." The riches of the ancients consisted chiefly in the fruits of the earth. "And he said within himself, What shall I do?" The very language of want and distress! The voice of one that is afflicted and groaning under his burden: What shalt thou do? Why, are not those at the door, whom God hath appointed to receive what thou canst spare? What shalt thou do? Why, *disperse* abroad and give to the poor. Feed the hungry. Clothe the naked. Be a father to the fatherless, and a husband to the widow. Freely thou hast received, freely give. O no! He is wiser than this comes to: he knows better than so.

2. "And he said, This will I do," without asking God's leave, or thinking about him any more than if there were no God in heaven or on earth,—"I will pull down my barns, and build greater, and there will I bestow all my goods and all my fruits." *My* fruits! They are as much thine as the clouds that fly over thy head! As much as the winds that blow around thee; which, doubtless, thou canst hold in thy fists! "And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years." "Soul, thou hast much goods!" Are then corn, and wine, and oil, the goods of an immortal spirit? "Laid up for many years." Who told thee so? Believe him not, he was a liar from the beginning. He could not prolong thy life, if he would. God alone is the giver of life and death. And he would not if he could, but would immediately drag thee to his own sad abode. "Soul, take thy ease, eat, drink, and be merry!" How replete with folly and madness is every part of this wonderful soliloquy! "Eat and drink!" Will thy spirit then eat and drink? Yea, but not of earthly food! Thou wilt soon eat livid flame, and drink of the fire

burning with brimstone. But wilt thou then drink and be merry? Nay, there will be no mirth in those horrid shades. Those caverns will resound with no music, but "weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth."

3. But while he was applauding his own wisdom, "God said unto him, Thou fool! This night shall thy soul be required of thee. And then whose shall those things be, which thou hast prepared?"

4. Let us consider his words a little more attentively. He said within himself, "What shall I do?" And is not the answer ready? Do good. Do all the good thou canst. Let thy plenty supply thy neighbour's wants, and thou wilt never want something to do. Canst thou find none that need the necessaries of life? That are pinched with cold or hunger? None that have not raiment to put on? Or a place where to lay their heads? None that are wasted with pining sickness? None that are languishing in prison? If you duly considered our Lord's words, "The poor have you always with you," you would no more ask, "What shall I do?"

5. How different was the purpose of this poor madman? "I will pull down my barns, and build greater, and there will I bestow all my goods." You may just as well bury them in the earth, or cast them into the sea. This will just as well answer the end, for which God entrusted you with them.

6. But let us examine a little farther the remaining part of his resolution. "I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years, take thy ease, eat, drink, and be merry." What, are these the goods of a never-dying spirit? As well may thy body feed on the fletinge breeze, as thy soul on earthly fruits. Excellent counsel then to such a spirit, to eat and drink! to a spirit made equal to angels, made an incorruptible picture of the God of glory, to feed not on corruptible things, but on the Fruit of the Tree of Life, which grows in the midst of the Paradise of God.

7. It is no marvel then, that God should say unto him,

"Thou fool!" For this terrible reason, were there no other, "This night shall thy soul be required of thee!"

"And art thou born to die,
To lay this body down?
And must thy trembling spirit fly
Into a land unknown?
A land of deepest shade,
Unpierc'd by human thought;
The dreary regions of the dead,
Where all things are forgot?"

"And whose then shall all the things be which thou hast provided?"

II. 1. The second thing which I proposed was, to apply these considerations, which it is certain, are some of the most important that can enter into the heart of man. In one sense, indeed, they have been applied already, for what has been said, has been all application. But I wish every one who reads or hears these words, directly to apply them to his own soul.

2. Does it not concern every one that hears,—"The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully," to inquire, Was this ever the case with *me?* Have I now, or have I ever heretofore, had more worldly goods given than I wanted? And what were my thoughts upon the occasion? Did I say in my heart, What shall I do? Was I distressed by my abundance? Did I think, "I have much goods laid up for many years?" Many years! Alas! What is thy life, if protracted to its utmost span? Is it not a vapour, that just appeareth, and vanisheth away! Say not then, *I* will pull down my barns; but say to God in the secret of thy heart, *Lord, save, or I perish.* See, my riches increase: let me not set my heart upon them. Thou seest I stand upon slippery ground, do thou undertake for me!

"Uphold me, Saviour, or I fall!
O reach me forth thy gracious hand;
Only for help on thee I call!
Only by faith in thee I stand!"

See, Lord, how greatly my substance increases! Nothing less than thy almighty power can prevent my setting my heart upon it, and being crushed lower than the grave!

3. I ask thee, O Lord, *What shall I do?* First of all, endeavour to be deeply sensible of thy danger, and make it matter of earnest and constant prayer, that thou mayest never lose that sense of it. Pray that thou mayest always feel thyself standing on the brink of a precipice. Mean time let the language of thy heart be, "Having more means, I will do more good, by the grace of God, than ever I did before. All the additional goods, which it hath pleased God to put into my hands, I am resolved to lay out with all diligence, in additional works of mercy. And hereby I shall 'lay up for myself a sure foundation, that I may attain eternal life.'"

4. Thou no longer talkest of *thy* goods or *thy* fruits, knowing they are not thine, but God's. The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof: he is the Proprietor of heaven and earth. He cannot divest himself of his glory: he must be the Lord, the Possessor of all that is. Only he hath left a portion of his goods in thy hands, for such uses as he has specified. How long he will be pleased to lodge them with thee, thou dost not yet know; perhaps only till to-morrow, or to-night. Therefore talk not, think not of many years. Knowest thou not, that thou art a creature of a day, that is crushed before the moth? That the breath which is in thy nostrils may be taken away at a moment's warning? That it may be resumed by him that gave it, at a time thou thinkest not of it? How knowest thou, but the next time thou liest down on thy bed, thou mayest hear, "This night shall thy soul be required of thee."

5. Is not thy life as unstable as a cloud? Fluctuating as a bubble on the water? It fleeth as it were a shadow, and never continueth in one stay. "Many years!" Who is sure of one day? And is it not an instance both of the wisdom and goodness of God, that he holds thy breath in his own hand, and deals it out from moment to moment, that thou mayest always remember, to "live each day, as

if it were the last." And after the few days thou shalt have spent under the sun, how soon will it be said,

"A heap of dust is all remains of thee,
'Tis all thou art, and all the proud shall be."

6. Consider again, the exquisite folly of that saying, "Soul, thou hast much goods." Are then the products of the earth, food for a heaven-born spirit? Is there any composition of earth and water, yea, though air and fire be added thereto, which can feed those beings of a higher order? What similitude is there between those ethereal spirits, and these base-born clods of earth? Examine the rest of this wise soliloquy, and see how it will apply to yourself! "Soul, take thy ease!" O vain hope! Can ease to a spirit spring out of the ground? Suppose the soil were ever so improved, can it yield such a harvest? "Eat, drink, and be merry!" What! can thy soul eat and drink,

"Manna such as angels eat,
Pure delight for spirits fit?"

But these do not grow on earthly ground; they are only found in the Paradise of God.

7. But, suppose the voice which commands life and death, pronounce, "This night thy soul shall be required of thee; then whose are all those things thou hast provided?" Alas! They are not thine! Thou hast no longer any part or lot in any of the things that are under the sun. Thou hast then no more share in any of these things of earth, than if the earth and the works of it were burned up. Naked thou camest out of thy mother's womb, and naked shalt thou return. Thou hast heaped up many things; but for what end? To leave them all behind thee! Poor shade! Thou art now stripped of all! Not even hope is left.

8. Observe the remark, which our Lord has left upon the whole occurrence: "*So is* every one who layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God!" Such a fool, such an egregious madman, as it is beyond the power of language to express! However wise he may be in his

own eyes, and perhaps in those of his neighbour, he is in reality the greatest fool under heaven, who heapeth up things from which he must soon be separated for ever: and whoever is seeking happiness in the things that perish, is *laying* up treasure for himself. This is absolutely inconsistent with *being* (or rather *growing*) *rich* toward God, with obeying that scriptural command, "My son, give me thy heart." He who is a child of God can truly say,

"All my riches are above!
All my treasure is thy love."

He can testify, "All my desire is unto thee, and to the remembrance of thy name."

9. Let every one who readeth these words, narrowly search his own heart. Where hast thou laid up thy treasure hitherto? Where art thou laying it up now? Art thou labouring to be rich toward God? Or to lay up earthly goods? Which takes up the greater part of thy thoughts? Thou that art careful for outward things, diligent in doing good, and exact in outward duties, beware of covetousness, of the decent, honourable love of money, and of a desire to lay up treasures on earth. Lay up treasures in heaven! A few days hence, thou wilt step into the land of darkness, where earthly fruits will be of no avail, where thou wilt not be capable of eating and drinking, or gratifying any of thy senses: what benefit wilt thou then receive from all thou hast laid up in this world? What satisfaction in all which thou hast treasured up, all thou hast left behind thee? Left behind thee! What! couldst thou then take nothing with thee into the everlasting habitations? Nay then, lay up treasure before thou go hence, which fadeth not away!

BALAM, *Feb.* 19, 1790.

SERMON CXXI.

ON THE WEDDING GARMENT.

MATTHEW XXII. 12.

"How camest thou in hither, not having a Wedding Garment?"

1. IN the verses preceding the text we read, "After these things, Jesus spake to them again in parables, and said, A certain king made a marriage (or marriage feast, rather) for his son. And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw one who had not on a wedding garment. And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither, not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless. Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

2. Upon this Parable one of our most celebrated Expositors comments in the following manner: "The design of this parable is to set forth that gracious supply made by God to men in and by the preaching of the Gospel. To invite them to this, God sent forth his servants, the Prophets and Apostles."—And on these words, "Why camest thou in hither, not having a wedding garment," he proceeds thus, "The punishment of whom ought not to discourage us, or make us to turn our backs upon the holy ordinances." Certainly it ought not; but nothing of this

kind can be inferred from this parable, which has no reference to the Ordinances, any more than to Baptism and Marriage. And probably we should never have imagined it, but the word *dinner* occurred therein.

3. However, most of the English Annotators have fallen into the same mistake with Mr. Burkitt. And so have thousands of their readers. Yet a mistake it certainly is. And such a mistake as has not any shadow of foundation in the text. It is true, indeed, that none ought to approach the Lord's Table without at least habitual preparation: that is, a firm purpose to keep all the commandments of God, and a sincere desire to receive all his promises. But that obligation cannot be inferred from this text, though it may from many other passages of Scripture. But there is no need of multiplying texts: one is as good as a thousand: there needs no more to induce any man of a tender conscience to communicate at all opportunities, than that single commandment of our Lord, "Do this in remembrance of me."

4. But, whatever preparation is necessary in order to our being worthy partakers of the Lord's Supper, it has no relation at all to the wedding garment mentioned in this parable. It cannot: for that commemoration of his death was not then ordained. It relates wholly to the proceedings of our Lord, when he comes in the clouds of heaven, to judge the quick and the dead: and to the qualifications which will then be necessary, to their inheriting "the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world."

5. Many excellent men, who are thoroughly apprised of this, who are convinced the wedding garment here mentioned, is not to be understood of any qualification for the Lord's Supper, but of the qualification for glory, interpret it of the righteousness of Christ, which (say they) is "The sole qualification for heaven: this being the only righteousness wherein any man can stand in the day of the Lord." For who, they ask, will then dare to appear before the great God, save in the righteousness of his well-beloved

Son? "Shall we not then at least, if not before, find the need of having a better righteousness than our own! And what other can that be, than the righteousness of God our Saviour?" The late pious and ingenious Mr. Hervey descants largely upon this: particularly in his elaborate Dialogues between Theron and Aspasio.

6. Another elegant writer, now, I trust, with God, speaks strongly to the same effect, in the preface to his comment on St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans: "We certainly," says he, "shall need a better righteousness than our own, wherein to stand at the bar of God in the day of judgment." I do not understand the expression. Is it scriptural? Do we read it in the Bible? Either in the Old Testament or the New? I doubt, it is an unscriptural, awkward phrase, which has no determinate meaning. If you mean by that odd, uncouth question, "In whose righteousness are you to stand at the last day,"—For *whose sake*, or *by whose merit* do you expect to enter into the glory of God? I answer without the least hesitation, for the sake of Jesus Christ, the righteous. It is through his merits alone that all believers are saved, that is, *justified*, saved from the guilt, *sanctified*, saved from the nature of sin, and *glorified*, taken into heaven.

7. It may be worth our while, to spend a few more words on this important point. *Is it* possible to devise a more unintelligible expression than this,—"In what righteousness are we to stand before God at the last day?" Why do you not speak plainly, and say, "*For whose sake* do you look to be saved?" Any plain peasant would then readily answer, "For the sake of Jesus Christ." But all those dark, ambiguous phrases tend only to puzzle the cause, and open a way for unwary hearers to slide into Antinomianism.

8. Is there any expression similar to this of the wedding garment to be found in Holy Scripture? In the Revelation we find mention made of "linen white and clean, which is the righteousness of the saints." And this too

many vehemently contend, means the righteousness of Christ. But how then are we to reconcile this with that passage in the seventh chapter, "They have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." Will they say, "The righteousness of Christ was washed and made white in the blood of Christ?" Away with such Antinomian jargon. Is not the plain meaning this? It was from the atoning blood, that the very righteousness of the saints derived its value and acceptableness with God.

9. In the nineteenth chapter of the Revelation, at the ninth verse, there is an expression, which comes much nearer to this:—"The wedding-supper of the Lamb." There is a near resemblance between this, and the marriage feast mentioned in the parable. Yet they are not altogether the same; there is a clear difference between them. The feast mentioned in the parable belongs to the Church Militant. That mentioned in the Revelation, to the Church Triumphant. The one to the kingdom of God on earth; the other to the kingdom of God in heaven. Accordingly in the former there may be found those, who have not a *wedding garment*. But there will be none such to be found in the latter. No, not "in that great multitude, which no man can number, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation." They will all be kings and priests unto God, and shall reign with him for ever and ever.

10. Does not that expression, "The righteousness of the saints, point out, what is the wedding garment in the parable? It is the "Holiness, without which no man can see the Lord." The righteousness of Christ, is, doubtless, necessary for any soul that enters into glory. But so is personal holiness too for every child of man. But it is highly needful to be observed, that they are necessary in different respects. The former is necessary to *intitle* us to heaven: the latter to *qualify* us for it. Without the righteousness of Christ we could have no *claim* to glory; with-

out holiness, we could have no fitness for it. By the former we become members of Christ, children of God, and heirs of the kingdom of heaven. By the latter, "we are made meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light."

11. From the very time that the Son of God delivered this weighty truth to the children of men, That all who had not the wedding garment would be cast into outer darkness, where are weeping and gnashing of teeth, the enemy of souls has been labouring to obscure it, that they might still seek death in the error of their life: and many ways has he tried to disguise the Holiness, without which we cannot be saved. How many things have been palmed, even upon the Christian world, in the place of this! Some of these are utterly contrary thereto, and subversive of it. Some were no ways connected with or related to it, but useless and insignificant trifles. Others might be deemed to be some part of it, but by no means the whole. It may be of use to enumerate some of them, lest ye should be ignorant of Satan's devices.

12. Of the first sort, things prescribed as Christian Holiness, although flatly contrary thereto, is idolatry: how has this, in various shapes, been taught, and is to this day, as essential to holiness? How diligently is it now circulated, in a great part of the Christian church? Some of their idols are silver and gold, or wood and stone, *graven by art and man's device:* some, men of like passions with themselves; particularly the Apostles of our Lord, and the Virgin Mary. To these they add numberless saints of their own creation, with no small company of angels.

13. Another thing as directly contrary to the whole tenor of true religion, is, what is diligently taught in many parts of the Christian church: I mean, the spirit of persecution: of persecuting their brethren even unto death. So that the earth has been often covered with blood by those who were called Christians, in order to "make their calling and election sure." It is true, many even in the Church of

Rome, who were taught this horrid doctrine, now seem to be ashamed of it. But have the heads of that community as openly and explicitly renounced that capital doctrine of devils, as they avowed it in the Council of Constance, and practised it for many ages? Till they have done this, they will be chargeable with the blood of Jerome of Prague, basely murdered, and of many thousands, both in the sight of God and man.

14. Let it not be said, "This does not concern us Protestants: we think and let think. We abhor the spirit of persecution, and maintain, as an indisputable truth, that every rational creature has a right to worship God, as he is persuaded in his own mind." But are we true to our *own* principles? So far, that we do not use fire and faggot. We do not persecute unto blood, those that do not subscribe to our opinions. Blessed be God, the laws of our country do not allow of this: but is there no such thing to be found in England as domestic persecution? The saying or doing any thing unkind to another for following his own conscience, is a species of persecution. Now, are we all clear of this? Is there no husband, who in this sense persecutes his wife? Who uses her unkindly in word or deed, for worshipping God after her own conscience? Do no parents thus persecute their children: no masters or mistresses their servants? If they do this, and think they do God service therein, they "must not cast the first stone at the Roman Catholics."

15. When things of an *indifferent nature* are represented as necessary to salvation, it is a folly of the same kind, though not of the same magnitude. Indeed it is not a little sin, to represent trifles as necessary to salvation: such as going on pilgrimages, or any thing that is not expressly enjoined in the holy Scripture. Among these we may undoubtedly rank Orthodoxy, or right Opinions. We know indeed that wrong opinions in religion naturally lead to wrong tempers or wrong practices; and that, consequently, it is our bounden duty to pray, that we may have a right

judgment in all things. But still a man may judge as accurately as the devil, and yet be as wicked as he.

16. Something more excusable are they, who imagine holiness to consist in things that are only a part of it. (That is, when they are connected with the rest; otherwise they are no part of it at all:) Suppose in doing no harm. And how exceedingly common is this? How many take holiness and harmlessness to mean one and the same thing? Whereas were a man as harmless as a post, he might be as far from holiness, as heaven from earth. Suppose a man, therefore, to be exactly honest, to pay every one his own, to cheat no man, to wrong no man, to hurt no man, to be just in all his dealings: suppose a woman to be uniformly modest in all her words and actions: suppose the one and the other, to be steady practisers of morality, that is, of justice, mercy, and truth: yet all this, though it is good, as far as it goes, is but a part of Christian holiness. Yea, suppose a person of this amiable character to do much good, wherever he is, to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, relieve the stranger, the sick, the prisoner; yea, and to save many souls from death: it is possible he may still fall far short of that holiness, without which he cannot see the Lord.

17. What then is that holiness, which is the true Wedding Garment, the only qualification for glory? *In Christ Jesus*, (that is, according to the Christian Institution,) whatever be the case of the heathen world, "neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation," the renewal of the soul "in the image of God wherein it was created." In "Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but faith which worketh by love." It first, through the energy of God, worketh love to God and all mankind; and by this love every holy and heavenly temper. In particular, lowliness, meekness, gentleness, temperance, and long suffering. "It is neither circumcision," the attending on all the Christian ordinances, "nor uncircumcision," the fulfilling of all

heathen morality, but "the keeping the commandments of God;" particularly those, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and thy neighbour as thyself." In a word, holiness is, the having "the mind that was in Christ," and the "walking as Christ walked."

18. Such has been my judgment for these threescore years, without any material alteration. Only about fifty years ago, I had a clearer view than before, of Justification by Faith: and in this, from that very hour I never varied, no not an hair's breadth. Nevertheless an ingenious man has publicly accused me of a thousand variations. I pray God, not to lay this to his charge! I am now on the borders of the grave, but by the grace of God, I still witness the same confession. Indeed some have supposed, that when I began to declare, "By grace ye are saved, through faith," I retracted what I had before maintained, "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord." But it is an entire mistake: these scriptures, well consist with each other: the meaning of the former being plainly this, By faith we are saved from sin, and made holy. The imaginanation that faith *supersedes* holiness, is the marrow of Antinomianism.

19. The sum of all is this: The God of Love is willing to save all the souls that he has made. This he has proclaimed to them in his word, together with the terms of salvation, revealed by the Son of his Love, who gave his own life, that they that believe in him might have everlasting life. And for these he has prepared a kingdom, from the foundation of the world. But he will not force them to accept of it: he leaves them in the hands of their own counsel; he saith, "Behold I set before you life and death; blessing and cursing; choose life that ye may live." Choose holiness by my grace, which is the way, the only way to everlasting Life." He cries aloud, Be holy, and be happy; happy in this world, and happy in the world to come. "Holiness becometh his house for ever!" This is the Wedding Garment of all that are called to "the Mar-

riage of the Lamb;" clothed in this, they will not be found naked: "They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." But as to all those who appear in the last Day without the Wedding Garment, the Judge will say, "Cast them into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

MADELEY, *March* 26, 1790.

SERMON CXXII.

HUMAN LIFE A DREAM.

PSALM LXXIII. 20.

"Even like as a Dream when one awaketh, so shalt thou make their Image to vanish out of the City."

1. ANY one that considers the foregoing verses, will easily observe, that the Psalmist is speaking directly of the wicked, that prosper in their wickedness. It is very common for these, utterly to forget that they are creatures of a day: to live as if they were never to die: as if their present state was to endure for ever: or, at least, as if they were indisputably sure, that they "had much goods laid up for many years:" so that they might safely say, "Soul, take thine ease; eat, drink, and be merry." But how miserable a mistake is this! How often does God say to such a one, "Thou fool! This night shall thy soul be required of thee!" Well then may it be said of them, "O, how suddenly do they consume,—perish, and come to a fearful end! Yea, even like as a dream when one awaketh, so shalt thou make their image to vanish out of the city."

2. But I would at present carry this thought farther: I would consider it in a general sense, and show how near a resemblance there is between human life and a dream. An ancient Poet carries the comparison farther still, when he

stiles life "the dream of a shadow." And so does Cowley, when he cries out,

"O Life, thou nothing's younger brother,
So like, that we mistake the one for the' other."

But setting these and all other flights of poetry aside, I would seriously inquire, wherein this resemblance lies, wherein the analogy between the one and the other does properly consist.

3. In order to this, I would inquire first, What is a Dream? You will say, "Who does not know this?" Might you not rather say, Who *does* know? Is there any thing more mysterious in nature? Who is there that has not experienced it, that has not dreamed a thousand times? Yet he is no more able to *explain* the nature of it, than he is to grasp the skies. Who can give any clear, satisfactory account of the parent of dreams, Sleep? It is true, many physicians have attempted this: but they have attempted it in vain. They have talked learnedly about it; but have left the matter at last just as dark as it was before. They tell us some of its properties and effects. But none can tell what is the *essence* of it.

4. However, we know the origin of dreams, and that with some degree of certainty. There can be no doubt, but some of them arise from the present constitution of the body, while others of them are probably occasioned by the passions of the mind. Again, we are clearly informed in Scripture, that some are caused by the operation of good angels: as others undoubtedly are owing to the power and malice of evil angels. (If we may dare to suppose, that there are any such now, or at least that they have any thing to do in the world!) From the same divine treasury of knowledge we learn, that on some extraordinary occasions, the Great Father of Spirits has manifested himself to human spirits, "In dreams and visions of the night." But which of all these arise from natural, which from supernatural influence, we are many times not able to determine.

5. And how can we certainly distinguish between our dreams and our waking thoughts? What criterion is there

by which we may surely know, whether we are awake or asleep? It is true, as soon as we awake out of sleep, we know we have been in a dream and are now awake. But how shall we know that a dream is such, while we continue therein? What is a dream? To give a gross and superficial, not a philosophical account of it: It is a series of persons and things presented to our mind in sleep, which have no being but in our own imagination. A dream, therefore, is a kind of digression from our real life. It seems to be an Echo, of what was said or done when we were awake. Or, may we say, a dream is a fragment of life, broken off at both ends, not connected, either with the part that goes before, or with that which follows after? And is there any better way of distinguishing our dreams from our waking thoughts, than by this very circumstance? It is a kind of parenthesis, inserted in life, as that is in a discourse which goes on equally well either with it, or without it. By this then we may infallibly know a dream, by its being broken off at both ends; by its having no proper connection with the real things, which either precede or follow it.

6. It is not needful to *prove*, that there is a near resemblance between these transient dreams, and the dream of life. It may be of more use to *illustrate* this important truth, to place it in as striking a light as possible. Let us then seriously consider, in a few obvious particulars, the case of one that is just awaking out of life, and opening his eyes in eternity.

7. Let us then propose the case. Let us suppose we had now before us, one, that was just passed into the world of spirits. Might not you address such a new-born soul in some such manner as this? You have been an inhabitant of earth, forty, perhaps fifty or sixty years. But now God has uttered his voice, "Awake, thou that sleepest!" You awake, you arise: you have no more to do with these poor transient shadows. Arise and shake thyself from the dust! See, all is *real* here! All is permanent, all eternal! Far more stable than the foundations of the earth; yea, than the pillars of the lower heaven. Now that your eyes are

open, see how inexpressibly different are all the things that are now round about you! What a difference do you perceive in yourself? Where is your body? Your house of clay? Where are your limbs? Your hands, your feet, your head? There they lie, cold, insensible!

"No anger hereafter, or shame
Shall redden the innocent clay;
Extinct is the animal flame,
And passion is vanish'd away!"

What a change is in the immortal spirit! You see every thing around you: but how? Not with eyes of flesh and blood! You hear: but not by a stream of undulating air, striking on an extended membrane. You feel: but in how wonderful a manner! You have no nerves to convey the ethereal fire to the common sensory: rather are you not now all eye, all ear, all feeling, all perception? How different, now you are thoroughly awake, are all the objects round about you? Where are the houses, and gardens, and fields, and cities, which you lately saw? Where are the rivers and seas, and everlasting hills? Was it then only in a dream that our poet discovered

"Earth hath this variety from heaven
Of pleasure situate in hill and dale?"

Nay, I doubt all these vanished away like smoke, the moment you awoke out of the body.

8. How strange must not only the manner of existence appear, and the place wherein you are, if it may be called *place*, though who can define or describe the *place of spirits*, but the inhabitants of that unknown region? Whether they are of the number of those unhappy spirits, that kept not their first estate, or of those holy ones, that still minister to the heirs of salvation? How strange are the employments of those spirits, with which you are now surrounded? How bitter are they to the taste of those that are still dreaming upon earth? "I have no relish, said one of these, (a much applauded Wit, who has lately left the body,) for sitting upon a cloud all day long, and singing praise to God." We may easily believe him; and there is

no danger of his being put to that trouble. Nevertheless this is no trouble to them who cease not day and night, but continually sing, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Sabaoth!"

9. Suppose this to be the case with any of you, that are now present before God. It may be so to-morrow: perhaps to night; perhaps this night your "soul may be required of you." The dream of life may end, and *you* may wake into broad eternity. See, there lies the poor inanimate carcase, shortly to be sown in corruption and dishonour. But, where is the immortal, incorruptible spirit? There it stands naked before the eyes of God! Mean time, what is become of all the affairs which you have been eagerly engaged in, under the sun! What profit have you reaped of all your labour, and care? Does your money follow you? No, you have left it behind you; the same thing to you, as if it had vanished into air. Does your gay or rich apparel follow you? Your body is clothed with dust and rottenness. Your soul indeed is clothed with immortality. But, O! What immortality? Is it an immortality of happiness and glory? Or of shame and everlasting contempt? Where is the honour, the pomp of the rich and the great? The applause that surrounded you? All are gone; all are vanished away, "like as a shadow that departeth." "The play is over," said Monsieur Moultray, when he saw the ball pierce the temples of his dying master *. And what cared the courtier for this? No more than if it had been the conclusion of a farce or dance. But while the buffoon slept on and took his rest, it was not so with the monarch. Though he was not terrified with any thing on earth; he would be at the very gates of hell. Vain valour! In the very article of death, he grasped the hilt of his sword! But where was he the next moment, when the sword dropped out of his hand, and, the soul out of his body? Then ended the splendid dream of royalty, of destroying cities, and of conquering kingdoms!

* Charles XII. King of Sweden, at the siege of Fredericksshall.

10. "How are the mighty fallen, and the weapons of war perished!" What are the weapons that are so terrible among *us*, to the inhabitants of eternity? How are the wise, the learned, the poet, the critic fallen, and their glory vanished away! How is the beauty fallen, the late idol of a gazing crowd? In how complete a sense are "the daughters of music brought low;" and all the instruments thereof forgotten? Are you not now convinced, that (according to the Hebrew proverb,) "a living dog is better than a dead lion?" For, the *living know*, yea *must* know, unless they obstinately refuse, "that they shall die. But the dead know not any thing," that will avail, for the ease of their pain, or to lessen their misery. Also "their hope and fear, and their desire," all are perished, all of them are fled: "they have not any portion in the things that are done under the sun!"

11. Where indeed is the *hope* of those who were lately laying deep schemes, and saying, "To-day, or to-morrow we will go to such a city, and continue there a year, and traffic, and get gain?" How totally had they forgotten that wise admonition, "Ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For, what is your life? It is a vapour that appeareth awhile and then vanisheth away!" Where is all your business? Where your worldly cares? Your troubles or engagements? All these things are fled away like smoke: and only your soul is left. And how is it qualified for the enjoyment of this new world? Has it a relish for the objects and enjoyments of the invisible world! Are your affections loosened from things below, and fixed on things above? Fixed on that place, where Jesus sitteth at the right hand of God? Then happy are ye: and when he whom ye love shall appear, "ye shall also appear with him in glory."

12. But how do you relish the company that surrounds you? Your old companions are gone: a great part of them probably separated from you never to return. Are your present companions angels of light? Ministering spirits, that but now whispered, "Sister spirit, come

away!" "We are sent to conduct thee over that gulf into Abraham's bosom." And what are those? Some of the souls of the righteous, whom thou didst formerly relieve with "the mammon of unrighteousness?" And who are now commissioned by your common Lord, to *receive*, to welcome you "into the everlasting habitations?" Then the angels of darkness will quickly discern they have no part in you. So they must either hover at a distance, or flee away in despair. Are some of these happy spirits that take acquaintance with you, the same that travelled with you below, and bore a part in your temptations? That together with you fought the good fight of faith, and laid hold on eternal life? As you then wept together, you may rejoice together, you and your guardian angels perhaps, in order to increase your thankfulness, for being "delivered from so great a death." They may give you a view of the realms below: those

"Regions of sorrow, doleful shades, where peace
And rest can never dwell."

See on the other hand, the mansions which were "prepared for you, from the foundation of the world!" O what a difference between the dream that is past, and the real scene that is now present with thee! Look up! See

"No need of the sun in that day,
Which never is follow'd by night!
Where Jesus's beauties display
A pure and a permanent light."

Look down! What a prison is there! "'Twixt upper, nether, and surrounding fire!" And what inhabitants! What horrid fearful shapes, emblems of their rage against God and man; the envy, fury, despair fixed within, causing them to gnash their teeth at Him they so long despised! Mean while does it comfort them to see, across the great gulf, the righteous in Abraham's Bosom? What a place is that! What "a house of God, eternal in the heavens!" Earth is only his footstool: yea,

"The spacious firmament on high,
And all the blue ethereal sky."

Well then may we say to its inhabitants,

"Proclaim the glories of your Lord,
Dispers'd through all the heavenly street;
Whose boundless treasures can afford
So rich a pavement for his feet."

And yet how inconsiderable is the glory of that house, compared to that of its great inhabitant! In view of whom all the first born sons of light, angels, archangels, and all the company of heaven, full of light as they are full of love,

"Approach not, but with both wings veil their eyes."

13. How wonderful then, now the dream of life is over, now you are quite awake, do all these scenes appear! Even such a sight as never entered or could enter into your hearts to conceive! How are all those that "awake up after his likeness, now satisfied with it?" They have now a portion, real, solid, incorruptible, "that fadeth not away." Mean time, how exquisitely wretched are they, who (to wave all other considerations) have chosen for their portion those transitory shadows, which now are vanished, and have left them in an abyss of real misery, which must remain to all eternity!

14. Now, considering that every child of man, who is yet upon earth, must sooner or later wake out of this dream, and enter real life; how infinitely does it concern every one of us, to attend to this, before our great change comes! Of what importance is it to be continually sensible of the condition, wherein we stand! How advisable by every possible means to connect the ideas of time and eternity! So to associate them together, that the thought of one may never recur to your mind, without the thought of the other! It is our highest wisdom, to associate the ideas of the visible and invisible world, to connect temporal and spiritual, mortal and immortal Being. Indeed in our common dreams we do not usually know we are asleep, whilst we are in the midst of our dream. As neither do we know it, while we are in the midst of the dream, which we call life. But you may be conscious of it now! God grant you may! before you awake in a winding sheet of fire!

15. What an admirable idea for thus associating the ideas of time and eternity, of the visible and invisible world, is laid in the nature of religion! For what is religion? (I mean scriptural religion, for all others is the vainest of all dreams.) What is the very root of this religion? It is Immanuel, God with us! God in man! Heaven connected with earth! The unspeakable union of mortal with immortal. For "truly our fellowship (may all christians say) is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. God hath given unto us eternal life: and this life is in his Son." What follows? "He that hath the Son hath life: and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life."

16. But how shall we retain a constant sense of this? I have often thought in my waking hours, "Now, when I fall asleep, and see such and such things, I will remember, it is but a dream." Yet I could not, while the dream lasted; and probably none else can. But it is otherwise with the dream of life, which we do remember to be such, even while it lasts. And if we do forget it, (as we are indeed apt to do,) a friend may remind us of it. It is much to be wished, that such a friend were always near: one that would frequently sound in our ear, "awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead!" Soon you will awake into real life. You will stand a naked spirit in the world of spirits, before the face of the great God! See that you now hold fast that "eternal life, which he hath given you in his Son."

17. How admirably does this life of God branch out into the whole of religion! I mean scriptural religion. As soon as God reveals his Son in the heart of a sinner, he is enabled to say, "The life that I now live, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." He then "rejoices in hope of the glory of God, even with joy unspeakable. And in consequence both of this faith and hope, the love of God is shed abroad in his heart, which filling the soul with love to all mankind, "is the fulfilling of the law."

17. And how wonderfully do both faith and love connect

God with man, and time with eternity! In consideration of this, we may boldly say,—

"Vanish then this world of shadows;
Pass the former things away;
LORD, appear! appear to glad us,
With the dawn of endless day!
O conclude this mortal story;
Throw this universe aside:
Come, eternal King of Glory,
Now descend,—and take thy Bride!"

SERMON CXXIII.

ON FAITH.

HEBREWS XI. 1.

" Now Faith is the Evidence of Things not seen."

1. MANY times have I thought, many times have I spoken, many times have I written upon these words: and yet there appears to be a depth in them, which I am in no wise able to fathom. Faith is in one sense of the word, a divine conviction of God and of the things of God; in another, (nearly related to, yet not altogether the same,) it is a divine conviction of the invisible and eternal World. In this sense I would now consider,—

2. I am now an immortal spirit, strangely connected with a little portion of earth; but this is only for a while. In a short time I am to quit this tenement of clay, and to remove into another state,

" Which the living know not,
And the dead cannot,—or they may not tell!"

What kind of existence shall I then enter upon, when my spirit has launched out f the body? How shall I feel myself? Perceive my own being? How shall I discern the things that are round about me, either material or spiritual objects? When my eyes no longer transmit the rays of light, how will the naked spirit *see?* When the organs of hearing are mouldered into dust, in what manner

shall I *hear?* When the brain is of no further use, what means of *thinking* shall I have? When my whole body is resolved into senseless earth, what means shall I have of gaining *knowledge?*

3. How strange, how incomprehensible are the means whereby I shall then take knowledge even of the material world? Will things appear then as they do now? Of the same size, shape, and colour? Or will they be altered in any, or all these respects? How will the Sun, Moon, and Stars appear? The sublunary Heavens? The Planetary Heavens? The region of the fixed Stars? How the fields of Ether, which we may conceive to be millions of miles beyond them? Of all this we know nothing yet: and indeed we need to know nothing.

4. What then can we know of those innumerable objects, which properly belong to the invisible world? Which mortal eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into our hearts to conceive? What a scene will then be opened, when the regions of Hades are displayed without a covering! Our English translators seem to have been much at a loss, for a word to render this. Indeed two hundred years ago it was tolerably expressed by the word *Hell*, which then signified much the same with the word *Hades*, namely, the invisible world. Accordingly, by Christ descending into hell, they meant that his body remained in the grave, his soul remained in Hades, which is the receptacle of separate spirits, from death to the resurrection. Here we cannot doubt but the spirits of the righteous are inexpressibly happy. They are, as St. Paul expresses it, *with the Lord*, favoured with so intimate a communion with him, as *is far better than* whatever the chief of the Apostles experienced while in this world. On the other hand, we learn from our Lord's own account of Dives and Lazarus, that the rich man, from the moment he left the world, entered into a state of torment. And *there is a great gulf fixed* in Hades, between the place of the holy, and that of unholy spirits, which it is impossible for either the one or the other to pass over. Indeed a gentleman of great

learning, the honourable Mr. Campbel, in his account of the Middle State, published not many years ago, seems to suppose that wicked souls may amend in Hades, and then remove to a happier mansion. He has great hopes, that *the rich man* mentioned by our Lord in particular, might be purified by that penal fire, till in process of time, he might be qualified for a better abode. But who can reconcile this with Abraham's assertion, that none can pass over the *great gulf?*

5. I cannot therefore but think that all those who are with *the rich man* in the unhappy division of Hades, will remain there, howling and blaspheming, cursing and looking upwards, till they are cast into "the everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." And on the other hand, can we reasonably doubt, but that those who are now in Paradise, in Abraham's bosom, all those holy souls, who have been discharged from the body, from the beginning of the world unto this day, will be continually ripening for heaven, will be perpetually holier and happier, till they are received into the "Kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world."

6. But who can inform us, in what part of the universe Hades is situated? This abode of both happy and unhappy spirits, till they are re-united to their bodies? It has not pleased God to reveal any thing concerning it, in the Holy Scripture: and, consequently, it is not possible for us, to form any judgment, or even conjecture about it. Neither are we informed how either one or the other are employed, during the time of their abode there. Yet may we not probably suppose, that the Governor of the world may sometimes permit wicked souls "to do his gloomy errands in the deep?" Or, perhaps, in conjunction with evil angels, to inflict vengeance on wicked men? Or will many of them be shut up in chains of darkness, unto the judgment of the great day? In the mean time, may we not probably suppose, that the spirits of the just, though generally lodged in Paradise, yet may sometimes, in conjunction with

the holy angels, minister to the heirs of salvation? May they not

"Sometimes on errands of love,
Revisit their brethren below?"

It is a pleasing thought, that some of these human spirits, attending us with, or in the room of angels, are of the number of those that were dear to us, while they were in the body. So that there is no absurdity in the question,

"Have ye your own flesh forgot,
By a common ransom bought?
Can death's interposing tide,
Spirits one in Christ divide?"

But be this as it may, it is certain, human spirits swiftly increase in knowledge, in holiness, and in happiness: conversing with all the wise and holy souls that lived in all ages and nations from the beginning of the world: with angels and archangels, to whom the children of men are no more than infants: and, above all, with the eternal Son of God, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. And let it be especially considered, whatever they learn, they will retain for ever. For they forget nothing. To forget is only incidental to spirits that are clothed with flesh and blood.

7. But how will this material universe appear to a disembodied spirit? Who can tell whether any of these objects that surround us will appear the same as they do now? And if we know so little of these, what can we now know, concerning objects of a quite different nature? Concerning the spiritual world? It seems, it will not be possible for us to discern them at all, till we are furnished with senses of a different nature, which are not yet opened in our souls. These may enable us both to penetrate the inmost substance of things, whereof we now discern only the surface, and to discern innumerable things, of the very existence whereof we have not now the least perception. What astonishing scenes will then discover themselves to

our newly-opening senses! Probably fields of Ether, not only ten fold, but ten thousand fold, "the length of this Terene." And with what variety of furniture, animate and inanimate! How many orders of Beings, not discovered by organs of flesh and blood? Perhaps, thrones, dominions, princedoms, virtues, powers?—Whether of those that have retained their first habitations and primeval strength, or of those that, rebelling against their Creator, have been cast out of heaven? And shall we not then, as far as angels' ken, survey the bounds of creation, and see every place where the Almighty,—

"Stopp'd his rapid wheels and said,—
This be thy just circumference, O world."

Yea, shall we not be able to move, quick as thought, through the wide realms of uncreated night? Above all, the moment we step into eternity, shall we not feel ourselves swallowed up of him, who is in this and every place, who filleth heaven and earth? It is only the veil of flesh and blood which now hinders us from perceiving, that the great Creator cannot but fill the whole immensity of space? He is every moment above us, beneath us, and on every side. Indeed, in this dark abode, this land of shadows, this region of sin and death, the thick cloud, which is interposed between, conceals him from our sight. But the veil will disappear, and he will appear in unclouded majesty, God over all, blessed for ever!

8. How variously are the children of men employed in this world! In treading o'er "the paths they trod six thousand years before!" But who knows how we shall be employed, after we enter that invisible world? A little of it we may conceive, and that without any doubt, provided we keep to what God himself has revealed in his Word, and what he works in the hearts of his children. Let us consider first, what may be the employment of unholy spirits from death to the resurrection. We cannot doubt but the moment they leave the body, they find themselves surrounded by spirits of their own kind, probably human as well as diabolical. What power God may permit these to

exercise over them, we do not distinctly know. But it is not improbable, he may suffer Satan to employ them, as he does his own angels, in inflicting death, or evils of various kinds on the men that know not God: for this end they may raise storms by sea or by land, they may shoot meteors through the air. They may occasion earthquakes, and in numberless ways afflict those whom they are not suffered to destroy. Where they are not permitted to take away life, they may inflict various diseases: and many of these which we judge to be natural, are undoubtedly diabolical. I believe this is frequently the case with Lunatics. It is observable, that many of those mentioned in Scripture, who are called Lunatics by one of the Evangelists, are termed Dæmoniacs by another. One of the most eminent physicians I ever knew, particularly in cases of insanity, the late Dr. Deacon, was clearly of opinion, that this was the case with many, if not with most Lunatics. And it is no valid objection to this, that these diseases are so often cured by natural means. For a wound inflicted by an evil spirit, might be cured as any other; unless that spirit were permitted to repeat the blow.

9. May not some of these evil spirits be likewise employed in conjunction with evil angels, in tempting wicked men to sin, and in procuring occasions for them? Yea, and in tempting good men to sin, even after they have escaped the corruption that is in the world. Herein doubtless they put forth all their strength, and greatly glory if they conquer. A passage in an ancient author, may greatly illustrate this: (although I apprehend, he did not intend, that we should take it literally.) "Satan summoned his powers, and examined, what mischief each of them had done. One said, I have set a house on fire, and destroyed all its inhabitants. Another said, I have raised a storm at sea, and sunk a ship, and all on board perished in the waters. Satan answered, Perhaps those that were burned or drowned were saved. A third said, I have been forty years tempting an holy man to commit adultery. And I have left him asleep in his sin. Hearing this, Satan

rose to do him honour, and all hell resounded with his praise." Hear this, all ye that imagine you cannot fall from grace!

10. Ought not we then to be perpetually on our guard, against those subtle enemies? Though we see them not,

"A constant watch they keep:
They eye us night and day;
And never slumber, never sleep,
Lest they should lose their prey."

Herein they join with "the rulers of the darkness (the intellectual darkness) of this world; the ignorance, wickedness, and misery, diffused through it, to hinder all good, and promote all evil! To this end they are continually working with energy, in the children of disobedience. Yea, sometimes they work by them those *lying wonders* that might almost deceive even the children of God.

11. But, mean time, how may we conceive the inhabitants of the other part of Hades, the souls of the righteous to be employed? It has been positively affirmed by some philosophical men, that spirits have no place! But they do not observe, that if it were so, they must be omnipresent. An attribute which cannot be allowed to any but the Almighty Spirit. The abode of these blessed spirits the ancient Jews were used to term Paradise: the same name which our Lord gave it, telling the penitent thief, "This day shalt thou be with me in Paradise." Yet in what part of the universe this is situated, who can tell, or even conjecture, since it has not pleased God to reveal any thing concerning it. But we have no reason to think they are confined to this place: or indeed to any other. May we not rather say, that *servants of his*, as well as the holy angels, they *do his pleasure*, whether among the inhabitants of earth, or in any other part of his dominions? And as we easily believe, that they are swifter than the light, even as swift as thought, they are well able to traverse the whole universe in the twinkling of an eye, either to execute the divine commands, or to contemplate the works of God. What a field is here opened before them! And how

immensely may they increase in knowledge, while they survey his Works of Creation or Providence, or his manifold Wisdom in the Church! What depth of wisdom, of power, and of goodness, do they discover in his methods of bringing many sons to glory! Especially while they converse on any of these subjects, with the illustrious dead of ancient days! With Adam, first of men, with Noah, who saw both the primeval and the ruined world. With Abraham, the friend of God, with Moses, who was favoured to speak with God, as it were, *face to face;* with Job, perfected by sufferings, with Samuel, David, Solomon, Isaiah, Daniel, and all the Prophets. With the Apostles, the noble army of Martyrs, and all the Saints who have lived and died to the present day; with our elder Brethren, the holy Angels, Cherubim, Seraphim, and all the companies of heaven! Above all the name of creature owns, with JESUS, the Mediator of the new covenant. Meantime how will they advance in holiness, in the whole image of God wherein they were created. In the love of God and man, gratitude to their Creator, and benevolence to all their fellow creatures. Yet it does not follow (what some earnestly maintain) that this general benevolence, will at all interfere with that peculiar affection which God himself implants for our relations, friends, and benefactors. O no! Had you stood by his bed-side, when that dying saint was crying out, "I have a father and a mother gone to heaven, (to Paradise, the receptacle of happy spirits.) I have ten brothers and sisters gone to heaven: and now I am going to them, that am the eleventh! Blessed be God that I was born!" Would you have replied, "What, if you are going to them? They will be no more to *you* than any other persons; for you will not know them." Not know them! Nay, does not all that is in you recoil at that thought? Indeed Sceptics may ask, How do disembodied spirits know each other? I answer plainly, I cannot tell. But I am certain that they do. This is as plainly proved from one passage of Scripture, as it could be from a thousand. Did not Dives and Lazarus know each other in

Hades, even afar off? Even though they were fixed on different sides of the *great gulf?* Can we doubt then whether the souls that are together in Paradise shall know one another? The Scripture therefore clearly decides this question. And so does the very reason of the thing. For we know, every holy temper which we carry with us into Paradise, will remain in us for ever. But such is gratitude to our benefactors. This, therefore, will remain for ever. And this implies, that the knowledge of our benefactors will remain, without which it cannot exist.

12. And how much will that add to the happiness of those spirits, who are already discharged from the body, that they are permitted to minister to those whom they have left behind? An indisputable proof of this we have, in the twenty-second chapter of the Revelation. When the apostle fell down to worship the glorious spirit which he seems to have mistaken for Christ, he told him plainly, "I am of thy fellow-servants, the prophets;" not God, not an angel, but a human spirit. And in how many ways may they minister to the heirs of salvation? Sometimes by counteracting wicked spirits whom we cannot resist, because we cannot see them: sometimes by preventing our being hurt by men, or beasts, or inanimate creatures: how often may it please God to answer the prayer of good Bishop Kenn,

"O may thine angels while I sleep
Around my bed their vigils keep!
Their love angelical instill
Stop all the consequence of ill.
May they celestial joys rehearse,
And thought to thought with me converse;
Or in my stead the whole night long
Sing to my God a grateful song."

And may not the Father of spirits allot this office jointly to angels, and human spirits waiting to be made perfect?

13. It may indeed be objected, that God has no need of any subordinate agents, of either angelical or human spirits, to guard his children, in their waking or sleeping

hours; seeing He that keepeth Israel doth neither slumber nor sleep. And, certainly, He is able to preserve them by his own immediate power; yea, and he is able, by his own immediate power only, without any instruments at all, to supply the wants of all his creatures, both in heaven and earth. But it is, and ever was his pleasure, not to work by his own immediate power only, but chiefly by subordinate means, from the beginning of the world. And how wonderfully is his wisdom displayed, in adjusting all these to each other! So that we may well cry out, "O Lord, how manifold are thy works! In Wisdom hast thou made them all."

14. This we know, concerning the whole frame and arrangement of the visible world. But how exceedingly little do we now know, concerning the invisible! And we should have known still less of it, had it not pleased the Author of both worlds, to give us more than natural light, to give us his Word, to be "a lantern to our feet, and a light in all our paths." And holy men of old, being assisted by his Spirit, have discovered many particulars, of which otherwise we should have had no conception.

15. And without Revelation, how little certainty of invisible things did the wisest of men obtain! The small glimmerings of light which they had were merely conjectural. At best they were only a faint, dim twilight, delivered from uncertain tradition; and so obscured by heathen fables, that it was but one degree better than utter darkness.

16. How uncertain the best of these conjectures was, may easily be gathered from their own accounts. The most finished of all these accounts, is that of the great Roman Poet. Where observe how warily he begins, with that apologetic Preface?—"Sit mihi fas audita loqui?"—"May I be allowed to tell what I have heard?"—And in the conclusion, lest any one should imagine, he believed any of these accounts, he sends the relater of them out of Hades, by the *ivory gate*, through which, he had just informed us, that only dreams and shadows pass! A very plain intimation,

that all which has gone before, is to be looked upon as a dream!

17. How little regard they had for all these conjectures, with regard to the invisible world, clearly appears from the words of his brother Poet, who affirms without any scruple,

"Esse aliquos manes & subterranea regna
Nec fieri credunt."

"That there are Ghosts or Realms below, not even a man of them now believes."

So little could even the most improved reason discover concerning the invisible and eternal world. The greater cause have we, to praise the Father of Lights, who hath opened the eyes of our understanding, to discern those things which could not be seen by eyes of flesh and blood: that he who of old time shined out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, and enlightened us with the Light of the Glory of God, in the Face of Jesus Christ, the author and finisher of our faith; by whom he made the worlds; by whom he now sustains whatever he hath made: for,

"Till nature shall her Judge survey,
The King Messiah reigns."

These things we have believed upon the Testimony of God, the Creator of all things visible and invisible: by this Testimony we already know the things that now exist, though not yet seen, as well as those that will exist in their season, when this visible world shall pass away, and the Son of Man shall come in his glory.

18. Upon the whole, what thanks ought we to render to God, who has vouchsafed this "evidence of things unseen," to the poor inhabitants of earth, who otherwise must have remained in utter darkness concerning them? How invaluable a gift, is even this imperfect light, to the benighted sons of men! What a relief is it to the defects of our senses, and, consequently of our understanding! Which can give us no information of any thing, but what is first presented by the senses. But hereby a new set of senses (so to speak) is opened in our souls: and by this means

"The things unknown to feeble sense,
Unseen by reason's glimmering ray,
With strong, commanding evidence,
Their heav'nly origin display.
Faith lends its realizing Light:
The clouds disperse, the shadows fly;
The' Invisible appears in sight,
And God is seen by mortal eye!"

London, *Jan.* 17, 1791.

SERMON CXXIV.

ON THE DECEITFULNESS OF THE HUMAN HEART.

JEREMIAH XVII. 9.

"The Heart of Man is deceitful above all Things, and desperately wicked: Who can know it?"

1. THE most eminent of the ancient Heathens have left us many testimonies of this. It was indeed their common opinion, that there was a time, when men in general were virtuous and happy: this they termed the *golden Age*. And the account of this was spread through almost all nations. But it was likewise generally believed, that this happy age had expired long ago. And that men are now in the midst of the *iron Age*. At the commencement of this, says the Poet,

——— "Irrupit venæ perjoris in ævum
Omne nefas: fugere pudor, verumq: fidesq:
In quorum subiere locum fraudesq: doliq:
Insidiæque, & vis, & amor sceleratus habendi."

——— "Immediately broke in
With a full tide, all wickedness and sin:
Shame, truth, fidelity, swift fled away,
And cursed thirst of gold bore unresisted sway."

2. But how much more knowing than these old Pagans are the present generation of Christians! How many

laboured Panegyrics do we now read and hear on the Dignity of Human Nature! One eminent Preacher, in one of his sermons preached and printed a few years ago, does not scruple to affirm, first, That men in general (if not every individual) are very *wise:* secondly, That men in general are very *virtuous*: and thirdly, That they are very *happy*. And I do not know, that any one yet has been so hardy as to controvert the assertion.

3. Nearly related to these were the sentiments of an ingenious gentleman, who being asked, "My Lord, what do you think of the Bible?" answered, "I think it is the finest book I ever read in my life. Only that part of it which indicates the Mediatorial Scheme, I do not understand. For I do not conceive there is any need of a Mediator between God and man. If indeed," continued he, "I was a sinner, then I should need a Mediator. But I do not conceive I am. It is true I often act wrong for want of more understanding. And I frequently *feel* wrong tempers, particularly proneness to anger. But I cannot allow this to be a sin; for it depends on the motion of my blood and spirits, which I cannot help. Therefore it cannot be a sin. Or if it be, the blame must fall not on *me*, but on him that made me." The very sentiments of pious Lord Kaim, and modest Mr. Hume.

4. Some years ago a charitable woman discovered, That there was no sinner in the world, but the devil. "For," said she, "he *forces* men to act as they do, therefore they are not accountable. The blame lights on Satan." But these more enlightened gentlemen have discovered, "That there is no sinner in the world but God. For he *forces* men to think, speak, and act as they do; therefore the blame lights on God alone." Satan, avaunt! It may be doubted, whether he himself ever uttered so foul a blasphemy as this.

5. But whatever unbaptized or baptized Infidels may say, concerning the innocence of mankind, He that made man, and that best knows what he has made, gives a very different account of him. He informs us, that "the heart

of man," of all mankind, of every man born into the world, "is desperately wicked," and that it is "deceitful above all things," so that we may well ask, "Who can know it?"

I. 1. To begin with this: "The heart of man is desperately wicked." In considering this, we have no need to refer to any particular sins. (These are no more than the leaves, or at most the fruits, which spring from that evil tree:) but rather to the general root of all. See how this was first planted in heaven itself, by Lucifer, *Son of the morning;* till then undoubtedly "one of the first, if not the first archangel;" "Thou saidst, I will sit upon the side of the North." See self-will, the first-born of Satan! "I will be like the Most High." See pride, the twin-sister of self-will. Here was the true origin of evil. Hence came the inexhaustible flood of evils upon the lower world. When Satan had once transfused his own self-will and pride into the parents of mankind, together with a new species of sin; love of the world, the loving the creature above the Creator, all manner of wickedness soon rushed in, all ungodliness and unrighteousness, shooting out into crimes of every kind, soon covering the whole face of the earth with all manner of abominations. It would be an endless task, to enumerate all the enormities that broke out. Now the fountains of the great deep were broken up. The earth soon became a field of blood: revenge, cruelty, ambition, with all sorts of injustice, every species of public and private wrongs, were diffused through every part of the earth. Injustice in ten thousand forms, hatred, envy, malice, bloodthirstiness, with every species of falsehood, rode triumphant, till the Creator looking down from heaven, would be no more intreated for an incorrigible race, but swept them off from the face of the earth. But how little were the following generations improved by the severe judgment! They that lived after the flood do not appear to have been a whit better than those that lived before it. In a short time, probably before Noah was removed from the earth, all unrighteousness prevailed as before.

2. But is there not a God in the world? Doubtless there is: and it is he that hath made us, not we ourselves. He made us gratuitously, of his own mere mercy: for we could merit nothing of him before we had a being. It is of his mercy that he made us at all; that he made us sensible, rational creatures, and above all, creatures capable of God. It is this, and this alone, which puts the essential difference between men and brutes. But if he has made us, and given us all we have; if we owe all we are and have to him, then surely he has a right to all we are and have, to all our love and obedience. This has been acknowledged by almost all who believed themselves to be his creatures, in all ages and nations. But a few years ago a learned man frankly confessed, "I could never apprehend, that God's having created us, gave him any title to the government of us. Or, that his having created us laid us under any obligation to yield him our obedience." I believe that Dr. Hutcheson was the first man that ever made any doubt of this. Or that ever doubted, much less denied, That a creature was obliged to obey his Creator. If Satan ever entertained this thought, (but it is not probable he ever did,) it would be no wonder he should rebel against God, and raise war in heaven. And hence would enmity against God arise in the hearts of men also; together with all the branches of ungodliness, which abound therein at this day. Hence would naturally arise the neglect of every duty which we owe to him as our Creator, and all the passions and hopes which are directly opposite to every such duty.

3. From the devil, the spirit of independence, self-will, and pride, productive of all ungodliness and unrighteousness, quickly infused themselves into the hearts of our first parents in Paradise. After they had eaten of the tree of knowledge, wickedness and misery of every kind, rushed in with a full tide upon the earth, alienated us from God, and made way for all the rest: Atheism, (now fashionably termed *Dissipation*,) and idolatry, love of the world, seeking happiness in this or that creature, covered the whole earth.

"Upright both in heart and will,
We by our God were made:
But we turn'd from good to ill,
And o'er the creatures stray'd:
Multiplied our wand'ring thought,
Which first was fix'd on God alone,
In ten thousand objects sought
The bliss we lost in One."

4. It would be endless to enumerate all the species of wickedness, whether in thought, word, or action, that now overspread the earth, in every nation, and city, and family. They all centre in this Atheism, or Idolatry: Pride, either thinking of themselves more highly than they ought to think, or glorying in something which they have received, as tho' they had not received it: Independence and self-will, doing their own will, not the will of him that made them. Add to this, seeking happiness out of God, in gratifying the desire of the flesh, the desire of the eye, and the pride of life. Hence, it is a melancholy truth, that (unless when the Spirit of God has made the difference) *all mankind* now, as well as four thousand years ago, "have corrupted their ways before the Lord: and every imagination of the thoughts of man's heart is evil, only evil, and that continually." However, therefore, men may differ in their outward ways, (in which undoubtedly there are a thousand differences,) yet in the inward root, the enmity against God, Atheism, Pride, Self-will, and Idolatry, it is true of all, that *the heart of man*, of every natural man, *is desperately wicked.*

5. But if this be the case, how is it that every one is not conscious of it? For who should "know the things of a man, like the spirit of a man that is in him?" Why is it that so few know themselves? For this plain reason, Because *the heart* is not only "desperately wicked, but deceitful above all things." So deceitful, that we may well ask, "Who can know it?" Who indeed, save God that made it? By his assistance, we may, in the second place consider this, the deceitfulness of man's heart.

II. 1. "It is deceitful above all things," that is, in the

highest degree, above all that we can conceive. So deceitful that the generality of men are continually deceiving both themselves and others. How strangely do they deceive themselves, not knowing either their own tempers or characters: imagining themselves to be abundantly better and wiser than they are. The ancient Poet supposes, there is no exception to this rule; that no man is willing to know his own heart.—"At nemo in sese tentat descendere, nemo!" None but those who are taught of God.

2. And if men thus deceive themselves, is it any wonder that they deceive others also, and that we so seldom find "an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile!" In looking over my books some years ago, I found the following memorandum, "I am this day thirty years old, and till this day I know not that I have met with one person of that age, except in my father's house, who did not use Guile, more or less."

3. This is one of the sorts of desperate wickedness which cleaves to the nature of every man, proceeding from those fruitful roots, Self-will, Pride, and Independence on God. Hence springs every species of vice and wickedness; hence every sin against God, our neighbour, and ourselves. Against God: forgetfulness and contempt of God, of his name, his day, his word, his ordinances; Atheism on one hand, and Idolatry on the other; in particular, love of the world, the desire of the flesh, the desire of the eyes, and the pride of life; the love of money, the love of power, the love of ease, the love of the "honour that cometh of men," the love of the creature more than the Creator, the being lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God. Against our neighbour: ingratitude, revenge, hatred, envy, malice, uncharitableness.

4. Hence there is in the heart of every child of man, an inexhaustible fund of ungodliness and unrighteousness, deeply and strongly rooted in the soul, that nothing less than Almighty Grace can cure it. From hence naturally arises a plentiful harvest of all evil words and works: and to complete the whole, that complex of all evils,—

—" That foul monster, War, that we meet
Lays deep the noblest work of the creation,
Which wears in vain its Maker's glorious image,
Unprivileged from Thee!"

In the train of this fell monster, are murder, adultery, rape, violence, and cruelty of every kind. And all these abominations are not only found in Mahometan or Pagan countries, where their horrid practice may seem to be the natural result of equally horrid principles; but in those that are called Christian countries, yea, in the most knowing and civilized States and Kingdoms. And let it not be said, this is only the case in Roman Catholic countries. Nay, we that are called Reformed, are not one whit behind them in all manner of wickedness. Indeed no crime ever prevailed among the Turks or Tartars, which we here cannot parallel in every part of Christendom. Nay, no sin ever appeared in Heathen or Papal Rome, which is not found at this day, in Germany, France, Holland, England, and every other Protestant as well as Popish country. So that it might now be said, with as much truth, and as few exceptions, of every Court in Europe, as it was formerly in the Court of Saul, " There is none righteous, no, not one: they are altogether become abominable: there is none that understandeth and seeketh after God."

5. But, is there no exception as to the wickedness of man's heart? Yes, in those that are born of God. " He that is born of God, keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not." *God hath purified his heart by faith*, so that his wickedness is departed from him. " Old things are passed away, and all things (in him) are become new." So that his heart is no longer desperately wicked, but " renewed in righteousness and true holiness." Only let it be remembered, that the heart even of a believer, is not wholly purified when he is justified. Sin is then overcome: but is not rooted out: it is conquered, but not destroyed. Experience shews him, first, That the root of sin, self-will, pride, and idolatry, remain still in his heart. But as long as he continues to watch and pray, none of

them can prevail against him. Experience teaches him, secondly, that sin (generally pride or self-will) cleaves to his best actions. So that even with regard to these, he finds an absolute necessity for the blood of atonement.

6. But how artfully does this conceal itself, not only from others, but even from ourselves. Who can discover it in all the disguises it assumes, or trace it through all its latent mazes? And if it be so difficult to know the heart of a good man, who can know the heart of a wicked one, which is far more deceitful? No unregenerate man, however sensible, ever so experienced, ever so wise in his generation. And yet these are they who pique themselves upon *knowing the world*, and imagine they *see through* all men! Vain men! One may boldly say, they *know nothing yet as they ought to know*. Even that Politician in the late reign neither knew the heart of himself nor of other men, whose favourite saying was, "Do not tell me of your virtue or religion: I tell you, every man has his price." Yes, Sir R—; every man like you: every one that sells himself to the devil.

7. Did that right honourable wretch, compared to whom Sir R— was a saint, know the heart of man? He that so earnestly advised his own son, "Never to speak the truth? To lie or dissemble as often as he speaks? To wear a mask continually?" That earnestly counselled him, "Not to debauch *single women*, (because some inconveniences might follow,) but always married women." Would one imagine this groveling animal ever had a wife or a married daughter of his own? O rare Lord C———! Did ever man so well deserve, though he was a Peer of the Realm, to die by the side of Newgate? Or did ever book so well deserve to be burnt by the common hangman, as his Letters? Did Mr. David Hume, lower, if possible, than either of the former, know the heart of man? No more than a worm or a beetle does. After "playing so idly with the darts of death;" do you now find it a laughing matter? What think you of Charon? Has he ferried you over Styx? At length he has taught you to know a little of your own

heart! At length you know it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God!

8. One of the ablest Champions of infidelity, (perhaps the most elegant, and the most decent writer, that ever produced a System of Religion, without being in the least obliged to the Bible for it,) breaks out in the fulness of his heart, "Who would not wish that there was full proof of the Christian Revelation, since it is undoubtedly the most benevolent System that ever appeared in the world!" Might he not add a reason of another kind; because without this, man must be altogether a mystery to himself. Even with the help of Revelation, he knows exceedingly little. But without it, he would know abundantly less. And nothing with any certainty. Without the light which is given us by the Oracles of God, how could we reconcile man's greatness with his meanness? While we acknowledged with Sir John Davies,

"I know my soul has power to know all things,
Yet is she blind and ignorant of all:
I know I'm one of Nature's little kings,
Yet to the least and vilest things in thrall."

9. Who then knoweth the hearts of all men? Surely none but he that made them. Who knoweth his own heart? Who can tell the depth of its enmity against God? Who knoweth how deeply it is sunk into the nature of Satan?

III. 1. From the preceding considerations, may we not learn, first, "He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool." For who that is wise would trust one whom he knows to be *desperately wicked?* Especially, whom he hath known by a thousand experiments, to be *deceitful above all things?* What can we expect, if we still trust a known liar and deceiver, but to be deceived and cheated to the end?

2. We may hence, in the second place, infer the truth of that other reflection of Solomon, "Seest thou a man that is wise in his own eyes; there is more hope of a fool than of him." For at what distance from wisdom must that man be, who never suspected his want of it? And will not his thinking so well of himself, prevent his receiving instruc-

tion from others? Will he not be apt to be displeased at admonition, and to construe reproof into reproach? Will he not therefore be less ready to receive instruction, than even one that has little natural understanding? Surely no fool is so incapable of amendment, as one that imagines himself to be wise. He that supposes himself not to need a Physician, will hardly profit by his advice.

3. May we not learn hence, thirdly, the wisdom of that caution, "Let him who thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall:" Or, (to render the text more properly,) *Let him that assuredly standeth, take heed lest he fall.* How firmly soever he may stand, he has still a deceitful heart. In how many instances has he been deceived already! And so he may again. Suppose he be not deceived now, does it follow that he never will? Does he not stand upon slippery ground? And is he not surrounded with snares into which he may fall and rise no more?

4. Is it not wisdom, for him that is now standing, continually to cry to God, "Search me, O Lord, and prove me; try out my reins and my heart! Look well, if there be any way of wickedness in me, and lead me in the way everlasting?" Thou alone, O God, *knowest the hearts of all the children of men;* O shew me what spirit I am of, and let me not deceive my own soul. Let me not "think of myself more highly than I ought to think." But let me always "think soberly, according as thou hast given me the measure of faith!"

HALIFAX, *April* 21, 1790.

SERMON CXXV.

THE HEAVENLY TREASURE IN EARTHEN VESSELS.

2 CORINTHIANS IV. 7.

"We have this Treasure in Earthen Vessels."

1. HOW long was man a mere riddle to himself! For how many ages were the wisest of men utterly unable to reveal the mystery, to reconcile the strange inconsistencies in him, the wonderful mixture of good and evil, of greatness and littleness, of nobleness and baseness! The more deeply they considered these things, the more they were entangled. The more pains they took in order to clear up the subject, the more they were bewildered in vain, uncertain conjectures.

2. But, what all the wisdom of man was unable to do, was in due time done by the wisdom of God. When it pleased God to give an account of the origin of things, and of man in particular, all the darkness vanished away, and the clear light shone. "God said, Let us make man in our own image." It was done. In the image of God man was made. Hence we are enabled to give a clear, satisfactory account of the greatness, the excellency, the dignity of man. But *man being in honour* did not continue therein, but rebelled against his sovereign Lord. Hereby he totally lost not only the favour, but likewise the image of God.

And *in Adam all died.* For fallen Adam begat a son *in his own likeness.* And hence we are taught, to give a clear, intelligible account of the littleness and baseness of man. He is sunk even below the beasts that perish. Human nature now is not only *sensual,* but *devilish.* There is in every man born into the world, (what is not in any part of the brute creation; no beast is fallen so low!) a *carnal mind,* which is *enmity,* direct enmity, *against God.*

3. By considering therefore these things in one view, the creation and the fall of man, all the inconsistencies of his nature are easily and fully understood. The greatness and littlenesss, the dignity and baseness, the happiness and misery of his present state, are no longer a mystery, but clear consequences of his original state, and his rebellion against God. This is the key that opens the whole mystery, that removes all the difficulty, by shewing what God made man at first, and what man has made himself. It is true, he may regain a considerable measure of "the image of God wherein he was created." But still, whatever we regain, we shall "have this treasure in earthen vessels."

In order to have a clear conception of this, we may inquire, first, *What is the treasure which we now have;* and in the second place consider, How we have this treasure in *earthen vessels.*

I. 1. And first, let us inquire, What is *this treasure* which Christian believers have. I say, believers, for it is of these directly that the Apostle is here speaking. Part of this they have in common with other men, in the remains of the image of God. May we not include herein, first, an immaterial principle, a spiritual nature, endued with understanding, and affections, and a degree of liberty, of a self-moving, yea, and self-governing power? Otherwise we were mere machines, stocks, and stones. And, secondly, all that is vulgarly called, Natural Conscience; implying some discernment of the difference between moral good and evil, with an approbation of the one, and disapprobation of the other, by an inward monitor, excusing or accusing? Certainly whether this is natural, or superadded by the grace

of God, it is found, at least in some small degree, in every child of man. Something of this is found in every human heart, passing sentence concerning good and evil, not only in all Christians, but in all Mahometans, all Pagans, yea, the vilest of Savages.

2. May we not believe, that all Christians, though but nominally such, have sometimes at least some desire to please God? As well as some light concerning what does really please him, and some convictions, when they are sensible of displeasing him? Such treasure have all the children of men, more or less, even when they do not yet know God.

3. But it is not of these that the Apostle is here speaking, neither is this the treasure which is the subject of his discourse. The persons concerning whom he is here speaking, are those that are born of God, those that "being justified by faith," have now redemption in the blood of Jesus, even the forgiveness of sins: those who enjoy that peace of God which passeth all understanding; whose soul doth magnify the Lord, and rejoice in him with joy unspeakable; and who feel the "Love of God shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto them." This then is the treasure which they have received, a faith of the operation of God; a peace which sets them above the fear of death, and enables them in every thing to be content; a hope full of immortality, whereby they already "taste of the powers of the world to come;" the love of God shed abroad in their hearts, with love to every child of man, and a renewal in the whole image of God, in all righteousness and true holiness. This is properly and directly the treasure, concerning which the Apostle is here speaking.

II. 1. But this, invaluable as it is, *we have in earthen vessels.* The word is exquisitely proper, denoting both the brittleness of the vessels, and the meanness of the matter they are made of. It directly means, what we term *earthen ware;* China, Porcelain, and the like. How weak, how easily broken in pieces! Just such is the case with a holy Christian. We have the heavenly treasure in earthen, mortal,

corruptible bodies. "Dust thou art," said the righteous Judge, to his rebellious creature, till then incorruptible and immortal, "and to dust thou shalt return." How finely (but with what a mixture of light and darkness) does the Heathen Poet touch upon this change? *Post ignem etherea domo subduxerat.* "After man had stolen fire from heaven." (What an emblem of forbidden knowledge!) *Magna et nova febrium, &c.* that unknown army of consumptions, fevers, sickness, pain of every kind, fixed their camp upon earth, which till then they could no more have entered, than they could have scaled heaven: and all tended to introduce and pave the way for the last enemy death. From the moment that awful sentence was pronounced, the body received the sentence of death in itself: if not from the moment our first parents completed their rebellion, by eating of the forbidden fruit. May we not probably conjecture that there was some quality naturally in this, which sowed the seeds of death in the human body, till then incorruptible and immortal? Be this as it may, it is certain that from this time, "the incorruptible body has pressed down the soul." And no marvel, seeing the soul, during its vital union with the body, cannot exert any of its operations, any otherwise than in union with the body, with its bodily organs. But all of these are more debased and depraved by the fall of man, than we can possibly conceive: and the brain, on which the soul more directly depends, not less than the rest of the body. Consequently, if these instruments, by which the soul works, are disordered, the soul itself must be hindered in its operations. Let a musician be ever so skilful, he will make but poor music, if his instrument be out of tune. From a disordered brain, (such as is more or less, that of every child of man,) there will necessarily arise confusedness of apprehension, shewing itself in a thousand instances, false judgment, the natural result thereof, and wrong inferences; and from these, innumerable mistakes will follow, in spite of all the caution we can use. But mistakes in the judgment will frequently give occasion to mistakes in practice: they will naturally cause our speaking

wrong in some instances, and acting wrong in others: nay, they may occasion not only wrong words or actions, but wrong tempers also. If I judge a man to be better than he really is, in consequence I really love him more than he deserves. If I judge another to be worse than he really is, I shall in consequence love him less than he deserves. Now both these are wrong tempers. Yet possibly it may not be in my power to avoid either the one or the other.

2. Such are the unavoidable consequences of having these *treasures* in *earthen vessels.* Not only death and its forerunners, sickness, weakness, and pain, and a thousand infirmities, but likewise error in ten thousand shapes, will be always ready to attack us. Such is the present condition of humanity! Such is the state of the wisest men! Lord, "what is man, that thou art still mindful of him, or the son of man, that thou regardest him?"

3. Something of this great truth, that the "corruptible body presses down the soul," is strongly expressed in those celebrated lines of the ancient Poet: speaking of the souls of men, he says,

"Igneus est ollis vigor et celestis origo
Seminibus, quantum non noxia corpora tardant
Terreniq; hebetant artus moribundaq; membra."

— — — —"These seeds of heavenly fire
With strength innate would to their source aspire,
But that their earthly limbs obstruct their flight,
And check their soaring to the plains of light."

4. But suppose it pleased the All-wise Creator, for the sin of man, to suffer the souls of men in general, to be weighed down in this miserable manner, by their corruptible bodies; why does he permit the excellent treasure which he has intrusted to his own children, to be still lodged in these poor earthen vessels? Would not this question naturally occur to any reflecting mind? Perhaps it would; and therefore the Apostle immediately furnishes us with a full answer; God has done this, that "the excellency of the power might be of God, and not of us;" that

it might be undeniably plain, to whom that excellent power belonged: that no flesh might glory in his sight, but that all who have received this treasure, might continually cry, "Not unto us, but unto thee, O Lord, be the praise, for thy Name and for thy Truth's sake."

5. Undoubtedly this was the main design of God, in this wonderful dispensation, to humble man, to make and keep him little, and poor, and base, and vile, in his own eyes. And whatever we suffer hereby, we are well repaid, if it be a mean of *hiding pride from man;* of laying us low in the dust, even then, when we are most in danger of being lifted up by the excellent gifts of God.

6. Nay, if we suffer hereby, from the mean habitation of the immortal spirit; if pain, sickness, and numberless other afflictions beside, to which we should not otherwise have been liable, assault us on every side, and at length bear us down into the dust of death: what are we losers by this? Losers! No, "In all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us;" come on then, disease, weakness, pain: afflictions, (in the language of men.) Shall we not be infinite gainers by them? Gainers for ever and ever! Seeing "these light afflictions, which are but for a moment, work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory!"

7. And are we not, by the consciousness of our present weakness, effectually taught wherein our strength lies? How loud does it proclaim, "Trust in the Lord JEHOVAH, for in him is everlasting strength!" Trust in him who suffered a thousand times more than ever you can suffer! Hath he not all power in heaven and in earth! Then, what though

"The heavenly treasure now we have
In a vile house of clay!
Yet he shall to the utmost save,
And keep it to that day."

POTTA, *June* 17, 1790.

SERMON CXXVI.

ON LIVING WITHOUT GOD.

EPHESIANS II. 12.

"*Without GOD in the World.*"

1. PERHAPS these words might be more properly translated, *Atheists in the world.* This seems to be a little stronger expression, than "without God in the world," which sounds nearly negative, and does not necessarily imply any more, than the having no fellowship or intercourse with God. On the contrary, the word *Atheist* is commonly understood to mean something *positive*, the not only disclaiming any intercourse with him, but denying his very Being.

2. The case of these unhappy men may be much illustrated by a late incident; the truth of which cannot reasonably be doubted, there having been so large a number of eye-witnesses. An ancient oak being cut down and split through the midst, out of the very heart of the tree, crept a large toad, and walked away, with all the speed he could. Now how long, may we probably imagine, had this creature continued there? It is not unlikely it might have remained in its nest above a hundred years. It is not improbable, it was nearly, if not altogether, co-eval with the oak; having been some way or other inclosed therein, at the time that it was planted. It is not, therefore, unreasonable to suppose, that it had lived that strange kind of life at least a

century. We say, *it had lived!* But what manner of life? How desirable! How enviable! As Cowley says,

"O life, most happy and most dear!
O life, that Epicures envy to hear!"

Let us spend a few thoughts upon so uncommon a case, and make some improvement of it.

3. This poor animal had organs of sense, yet it had not any sensation. It had eyes, yet no ray of light ever entered its black abode. From the very first instant of its existence there, it was shut up in impenetrable darkness. It was shut up from the sun, moon, and stars, and from the beautiful face of nature. Indeed from the whole visible world, as much as if it had no being.

4. As no air could penetrate its sable recess, it consequently could have no *hearing*. Whatever organs it was provided with, they could be of no use, seeing no undulating air could find a way through the walls that surrounded it. And there is no reason to believe, that it had any sense analogous to those either of *smelling* or *tasting*. In a creature, which did not need any food, the second would have been of no possible use. Neither was there any way, whereby the objects of smell or taste could make their approach to it. It must be very little if at all, that it could be acquainted with the general sense, that of *feeling*: as it always continued in one unvaried posture amidst the parts that surrounded it, all of these being immovably fixed, could make no new impression upon it. So that it had only one feeling from hour to hour, and from day to day, during its whole duration.

5. And as this poor animal was destitute of *sensation*, it must have equally been destitute of *reflection*. Its head, (of whatever sort it was,) having no materials to work upon, no ideas of sensation of any kind, could not produce any degree of reflection. It scarcely, therefore, could have any *memory*, or any *imagination*. Nor could it have any locomotive *power*, while it was so closely bound in on every side. If it had in itself some springs of motion, yet it was impossible that power should be exerted, because the

narrowness of its cavern could not allow of any change of place.

6. How exact a parallel may be drawn between this creature, (hardly to be called an animal,) and a man that is *without God in the world!* Such as are a vast majority of even those that are called Christians! I do not mean that they are Atheists in the common sense of the word. I do not believe, that these are so numerous as many have imagined. Making all the inquiry and observation I could, for upwards of fifty years, I could not find twenty who seriously disbelieved the Being of a God: nay, I have found only two of these, (to the best of my judgment,) in the British Islands: both of these then lived in London, and had been of this persuasion many years. But several years before they were called to appear before God, both John S— and John B— were fully convinced that there is a God, and, what is more remarkable, they were first convinced that he is a terrible, and then, that he is a merciful God. I mention these two accounts, to shew, not only that there are real literal Atheists in the world, but also, that even then if they will condescend to ask it, they may find "grace to help in time of need."

7. But I do not mean such as these, when I now speak of those who are Atheists, or, "without God in the world." But of such as are only practical Atheists, as have not God in all their thoughts: such as have not acquainted themselves with him, neither have any fellowship with him; such as have no more intercourse with God or the invisible world, than this animal had with the visible. I will endeavour to draw the parallel between these. And may God apply it to their hearts!

8. Every one of these is in exactly such a situation with regard to the invisible, as the toad was in respect to the visible world. That creature had, undoubtedly, a sort of life, such as it was. It certainly had all the internal and external parts, that are essential to animal life. And, without question, it had suitable juices, which kept up a kind of circulation. This was a life indeed! and exactly

such a life is that of the Atheist; the man without God in the world. What a thick veil between him and the invisible world; which, with regard to him, is as though it had no being. He has not the least perception of it; not the most distant idea. He has not the least sight of God, the intellectual sun; nor any the least attraction toward him, or desire to have any knowledge of his ways: although his light be gone forth into all lands, and his sound into the end of the world, yet he *heareth* no more thereof than of the fabled music of the spheres. He *tastes* nothing of the goodness of God, or the powers of the world to come. He does not *feel*, as our church speaks, the working of the Holy Spirit in his heart. In a word, he has no more intercourse with, or knowledge of the spiritual world, than this poor creature had of the natural, while shut up in its dark inclosure.

9. But the moment the Spirit of the Almighty strikes the heart of him that was till then without God in the world, it breaks the hardness of his heart, and creates all things new. The Sun of Righteousness appears, and shines upon his soul, shewing him the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. He is in a new world. All things round him are become new. Such as it never before entered into his heart to conceive. He sees, so far as his newly opened eyes can bear the sight,

> "The opening heavens around him shine,
> With beams of sacred bliss."

He sees, that he has "an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous," and that he has "redemption in his Blood, the remission of sins." He sees a "new way that is opened into the Holiest by the Blood of Jesus;" and his light "shineth more and more unto the perfect day."

10. By the same gracious stroke, he that before had ears but heard not, is now made capable of *hearing*. He hears the voice that raiseth the dead, the voice of him that is the Resurrection and the Life. He is no longer deaf to his invitations or commands, to his promises or threatenings, but gladly hears every word that proceeds out of his

mouth; and governs thereby all his thoughts, words, and actions.

11. At the same time he receives other spiritual senses, capable of discerning spiritual good and evil. He is enabled to *taste* as well as to see, how gracious the Lord is. He enters into the Holiest by the Blood of Jesus, and tastes of the powers of the world to come. He finds Jesu's love far better than wine, yea, sweeter than honey or the honey-comb. He knows what that meaneth, "all thy garments smell of myrrh, aloes, and cassia." He *feels* the love of God shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost which is given unto him: or, as our church expresses it, "feels the working of the Spirit of God in his heart." Mean time it may easily be observed, that the substance of all these figurative expressions is comprized in that one word FAITH, taken in its widest sense; being enjoyed more or less, by every one that believes in the Name of the Son of God. This change from spiritual death to spiritual life, is properly the New Birth: all the particulars whereof are admirably well expressed by Dr. Watts in one verse,

"Renew my eyes, and form my ears,
And mould my heart afresh;
Give me new passions, hopes, and fears,
And turn the stone to flesh."

12. But before this universal change, there may be many partial changes in a natural man, which are frequently mistaken for it, whereby many say Peace, peace, to their souls, when there is no peace. There may be not only a considerable change in the life, so as to refrain from open sin, yea the easily besetting sin: but also a considerable change of tempers, conviction of sin, strong desires, and good resolutions. And here we have need to take great care, not on the one hand to despise the day of small things, nor on the other, to mistake any of these partial changes, for that entire, general change, the New Birth; that total change, from the image of the earthly Adam, into the image of the heavenly; from an earthly, sensual, devilish mind, into the mind that was in Christ.

13. Settle it, therefore, in your hearts, that however you

may be changed in many other respects, yet in Christ Jesus, that is, according to the christian institution, nothing will avail, without the whole mind that was in Christ, enabling you to walk as Christ walked. Nothing is more sure than this, "If any man be in Christ," a true believer in him, "he is a new creature: old things in him are passed away, all things are become new."

14. From hence we may clearly perceive, the wide difference there is between christianity and morality. Indeed nothing can be more sure than that true christianity cannot exist, without both the inward experience, and outward practice of justice, mercy, and truth, and every other branch of morality. But it is equally certain, that all morality, all the justice, mercy, and truth, which can possibly exist without christianity, profiteth nothing at all, is of no value in the sight of God, to those that are under the christian dispensation. Let it be observed, I purposely add, to those that are under the christian dispensation, because I have no authority from the Word of God, "to judge those that are without;" nor do I conceive, that any man living has a right to sentence all the Heathen and Mahometan world to damnation. It is far better, to leave them to him that made them, and who is "the Father of the spirits of all flesh;" who is the God of the Heathens as well as the Christians, and who hateth nothing that he hath made. But mean time, this is nothing to those that name the Name of Christ: all those being under the law, the christian law, shall, undoubtedly, be judged thereby. And of consequence, unless they be so changed as was the the animal above mentioned, unless they have new senses, ideas, passions, tempers, they are no christians! However just, true, or merciful they may be, they are but Atheists still.

15. Perhaps there may be some well-meaning persons, who carry this farther still: who aver, whatever change is wrought in men, whether in their hearts or lives, yet if they have not clear views of those capital doctrines, the Fall of Man, Justification by Faith, and the Atonement made by the Death of Christ, and of his righteousness

transferred to them, they can have no benefit from his death. I dare in no wise affirm this. Indeed I do not believe it. I believe the merciful God regards the lives and tempers of men more than their ideas. I believe he respects the goodness of the heart, rather than the clearness of the head: and that if the heart of a man be filled, (by the grace of God, and the power of his Spirit,) with the humble, gentle, patient love of God and man, God will not cast him into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels, because his ideas are not clear, or because his conceptions are confused: "without holiness," I own, "no man shall see the Lord:" but I dare not add, or "clear ideas."

16. But to return to the text. Let me intreat all of you who are still "without God in the world," to consider that with all your humanity, benevolence, and virtue, you are still

Inclusi tenebris, & carcere cæco:
"Inclos'd in darkness and infernal shade."

My dear friends, you do not see God. You do not see the Sun of Righteousness. You have no fellowship with the Father, or with his Son Jesus Christ. You never heard the voice that raiseth the dead. Ye know not the voice of your Shepherd. Ye have not received the Holy Ghost. Ye have no spiritual senses. You have your old, natural ideas, passions, joys, and fears: you are not new creatures. O cry to God, that he may rend the veil which is still upon your hearts! And which gives you occasion to complain,

"O dark, dark, dark! I still must say,
Amidst the blaze of gospel-day!"

O that you may this day hear his voice, who speaketh as never man spake, saying, "Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee!" Is it not *his* voice that crieth aloud, "Look unto me, and be thou saved!" He saith, "Lo, I come!" "Even so, Lord Jesus: Come quickly!"

ROTHERHAM, *July* 6, 1790.

SERMON CXXVII.

ON THE DANGER OF INCREASING RICHES.

PSALM LXII. 10.

"*If Riches increase, set not thine Heart upon them.*"

1. FROM that express declaration of our Lord, "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven," we may easily learn, that none can *have* riches, without being greatly endangered by them. But if the danger of barely having them is so great, how much greater is the danger of *increasing* them? This danger is great even to those who receive what is transmitted to them by their forefathers; but it is abundantly greater to those who acquire them by their skill and industry. Therefore nothing can be more prudent than this caution, "If riches increase, set not thine heart upon them."

2. It is true, riches and the increase of them, are the gift of God. Yet great care is to be taken, that what is intended for a blessing, do not turn into a curse. To prevent which, it is highly expedient to consider seriously,

I. What is meant by *Riches*, and when they may be said to *increase*.

II. What is implied in *setting our Hearts upon them*, and how we may avoid it.

I. Consider, first, What is here meant by *Riches*. Indeed some may imagine, that it is hardly possible to mistake the meaning of this common word. Yet in truth, there are thousands in this mistake: and many of them quite innocently. A person of note hearing a sermon preached upon this subject several years since, between surprise and indignation broke out aloud, "Why does he talk about riches here? There is no rich man at Whitehaven, but Sir James L——r." And it is true, there was none but he that had forty thousand pounds a year, and some millions in ready money. But a man may be rich that has not a hundred a year, nor even one thousand pounds in cash. Whosoever has food to eat and raiment to put on, with something over, is rich. Whoever has the necessaries and conveniences of life for himself and his family, and a little to spare for them that have not, is properly a rich man. Unless he is a miser, a lover of money, one that hoards up what he can and ought to give to the poor. For if so, he is a poor man still, though he has millions in the bank: yea, he is the poorest of men; for

"The beggars' but a common lot deplore:
The rich poor man's emphatically poor."

2. But here an exception may be made. A person may have more than necessaries and conveniences for his family, and yet not be rich. For he may be in debt; and his debts may amount to more than he is worth. But if this be the case, he is not a rich man, how much money soever he has in his hands. Yea, a man of business may be afraid, that this is the real condition of his affairs, whether it be or not: and then he cannot be so charitable as he otherwise would, for fear of being unjust. How many that are engaged in trade, are in this very condition! Those especially that trade to a very large amount: for their affairs are frequently so entangled, that it is not possible to determine, with any exactness, how much they are worth, or indeed whether they are worth any thing or nothing. Should we not make a fair allowance for them?

3. And beware of forming a hasty judgment concerning

the fortune of others. There may be secrets in the situation of a person, which few but God are acquainted with. Some years since, I told a gentleman, "Sir, I am afraid you are covetous." He asked me, What is the reason of your fear? I answered, "A year ago, when I made a collection for the expense of repairing the Foundery, you subscribed five guineas. At the subscription made this year you subscribed only half a guinea." He made no reply: but after a time asked, "Pray, Sir, answer me a question. Why do you live upon potatoes?" (I did so between three and four years.) I replied, "It has much conduced to my health." He answered, "I believe it has. But did you not do it likewise to save money?" I said, "I did, for what I save from my own *meat*, will feed another that else would have none." "But, Sir," said he, "if this be your motive you may save much more. I know a man that goes to the market at the beginning of every week. There he buys a pennyworth of parsnips, which he boils in a large quantity of water. The parsnips serve him for food, and the water for drink the ensuing week. So his meat and drink together cost him only a penny a week." This he constantly did, though he had then two hundred pounds a year; to pay the debts which he had contracted, before he knew God!" And this was he, whom I had set down for a covetous man!

4. But there are those who are conscious before God that they are rich. And, doubtless, some among *you* are of the number. You have more of the goods of this world than is needful either for yourself or your family. Let each consider for himself. Do *your* riches increase? Do not you understand that plain expression? Have you not more money or more of money's worth, than you had ten or twenty years ago? Or at this time last year? If you keep any account, you can easily know this. Indeed you ought to know; otherwise you are not a good steward, even in this respect, of the mammon of unrighteousness. And every man, whether engaged in trade or not, ought to know, whether his substance lessens or increases.

5. But many have found out a way never to be rich, though their substance increase ever so much. It is this. As fast as ever money comes in, they lay it out, either in land, or enlarging their business. By this means each of these, keeping himself bare of money, can still say, "I am not rich." Yea, though he has ten, twenty, a hundred times more substance, than he had some years ago. This may be explained by a recent case. A gentleman came to a merchant in London a few years since, and told him, "Sir, I beg you will give me a guinea, for a worthy family in great distress." He replied, "Really, Mr. M. I cannot afford to give it you just now. But if you will call upon me when I am worth ten thousand pounds, upon such an occasion, I will give you ten guineas." Mr. M., after some time, called upon him again, and said, "Sir, I claim your promise, now you are worth ten thousand pounds." He replied, "That is very true. But I assure you, I cannot spare one guinea so well as I could then."

6. It is possible, for a man to cheat himself by this ingenious device. And he may cheat other men: for as long "as thou doest good unto thyself, men will speak well of thee." "A right *good man*," says the *Londoner*: "he is worth a plumb:" (a hundred thousand pounds). But, alas! he cannot deceive the devil. Ah no! The curse of God is upon thee already, and all that thou hast. And to-morrow, when the devil seizes thy soul, will he not say, "What do all thy riches profit thee? Will they purchase a pillow for thy head, in the lake of fire burning with brimstone? Or will they procure thee a cup of water to cool thy tongue, while thou art tormented in that flame?" O follow the wise direction here given, that God may not say unto thee, "Thou fool!"

7. This shift, therefore, will not avail. It will not be any protection, either against the wrath of God, or the malice and power of the devil. Thou art convicted already of *setting thy heart* upon thy riches, if thou layest out all thou hast, above the conveniences of life, on adding money to money, house to house, or field to field, without giving

at least a tenth of thine income, (the Jewish proportion,) to the poor. By whatsoever means thy riches increase, whether with or without labour; whether by trade, legacies, or any other way, unless thy charities increase in the same proportion, unless thou givest a full tenth of thy substance, of thy fixed and occasional income, thou dost undoubtedly set thy heart upon thy gold, and it will *eat thy flesh as fire!*

8. But, O! who can convince a rich man that he sets his heart upon riches? For considerably above half a century I have spoken on this head, with all the plainness that was in my power. But with how little effect! I doubt whether I have in all that time convinced fifty misers of covetousness. When the lover of money was described ever so clearly, and painted in the strongest colours, who applied it to himself? To whom did God and all that knew him say, *Thou art the man?* If he speak to any of you that are present, O do not stop your ears! Rather say with Zaccheus, "Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor: and if I have done any wrong to any man, I restore him fourfold!" He did not mean that he had done this in time past; but that he determined to do so for the time to come. I charge thee before God, thou lover of money, to *go and do likewise!*

9. I have a message from God unto thee, O rich man, whether thou wilt hear, or whether thou wilt forbear. Riches have increased with thee! at the peril of thy soul, "set not thine heart upon them." Be thankful to him that gave thee such a talent, so much power of doing good. Yet dare not to rejoice over them, but with fear and trembling. *Cave ne inhereas*, says pious Kempis, *ne capiaris et pereas*. Beware thou cleave not unto them, lest thou be entangled and perish. Do not make them thy end, thy chief delight; thy happiness, thy God! See that thou expect not happiness in money, nor any thing that is purchasable thereby; in gratifying either the desire of the flesh, the desire of the eyes, or the pride of life.

10. But let us descend to particulars: and see that each

of you deal faithfully with his own soul. If any of you have now twice, thrice, or four times as much substance as when you first saw my face, faithfully examine yourselves, and see if you do not set your hearts, if not directly on money or riches themselves, yet on some of the things that are purchasable thereby, which comes to the same thing. All those the Apostle John includes under that general name, *the world:* and the desire of them, or to seek happiness in them, under that form, "the love of the world." This he divides into three branches, "The desire of the flesh, the desire of the eyes, and the pride of life." Fairly examine yourselves with regard to these. And first, as to "the desire of the flesh." I believe this means the seeking of happiness in the things that gratify the senses. To instance in one, do not you seek your happiness in enlarging the pleasure of *tasting?* To be more particular, Do you not *eat* more plentifully or more delicately than you did ten or twenty years ago? Do not you use more *drink*, or drink of a more *costly* kind, than you did then? Do you sleep on as hard a bed as you did once, suppose your health will bear it? To touch on one point more; Do you *fast* as often now you are rich, as you did when you were poor? Ought you not in all reason to do this, rather more often than more seldom? I am afraid, your own heart condemns you. You are not clear in this matter.

11. The second branch of the love of the world, "the desire of the eyes," is of a wider extent. We may understand thereby, The seeking our happiness in gratifying the imagination, (which is chiefly done by means of the eyes) by grand, or new, or beautiful objects. If they may not all be reduced to one head: since neither grand nor beautiful objects are pleasing, when the novelty of them is gone. But are not the veriest trifles pleasing as long as they are new? Do not some of you on the score of novelty, seek no small part of your happiness in that trifle of trifles, dress? Do not you bestow more money, or (which is the same) more time or pains upon it, than you did once? I doubt this is not done to please God. Then it pleases the devil.

If you laid aside your needless ornaments some years since, ruffles, necklaces, spider-caps, ugly, unbecoming bonnets, costly linen, expensive laces, have you not, in defiance of religion and reason, taken to them again?

12. Perhaps you say, "You can now *afford* the expense." This is the quintessence of nonsense. Who gave you this addition to your fortune? Or (to speak properly) *lent* it to you? To speak more properly still, Who lodged it for a time in your hands as his *stewards?* Informing you at the same time, for *what* purposes he intrusted you with it? And can you *afford* to waste your Lord's goods, for every part of which you are to give an account? Or to expend them in any other way than that which he hath expressly appointed? Away with this vile, diabolical cant! Let it never more come out of your lips. This *affording* to rob God, is the very cant of hell. Do not you know, that God *intrusted* you with that money (all above what buys necessaries for your families) to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, to help the stranger, the widow, the fatherless: and indeed as far as it will go, to relieve the wants of all mankind? How can you, how dare you defraud your Lord, by applying it to any other purpose? When he intrusted you with a little, did he not intrust you with it that you might lay out all that little in doing good? And when he intrusted you with more, did he not intrust you with that additional money that you might do so much the more good, as you had more ability? Had you any more right to waste a pound, a shilling, or a penny, than you had before? You have, therefore, no more right to gratify the desire of the flesh, or the desire of the eyes now, than when you were a beggar. O no! Do not make so poor a return to your beneficent Lord! Rather the more he intrusts you with, be so much the more careful to employ every mite as he hath appointed.

13. Ye angels of God, ye servants of his, that continually do his pleasure; our common Lord hath intrusted you also with talents, far more precious than gold and silver, that you may minister in your various offices to the

heirs of salvation. Do not you employ every mite of what you have received, to the end for which it was given you? And hath he not directed us, to do his Will on earth, *as it is done* by you *in heaven?* Brethren, what are we doing? Let us awake! Let us arise! Let us imitate those flaming ministers! Let us employ our whole soul, body, and substance, according to the Will of our Lord. Let us render unto God the things that are God's, even all we are and all we have!

14. Most of those, who when riches increase, set their hearts upon them, do it indirectly in some of the preceding instances. But there are others who do this more directly, being properly *lovers of money;* who love it for its own sake, not only for the sake of what it procures. But this vice is very rarely found in children or young persons; but only or chiefly in the old; in those that have the least need of money, and the least time to enjoy it. Might not this induce one to think, in many cases, it is a penal evil? That it is a sin-punishing evil? That when a man has for many years hid his precious talent in the earth, God delivers him up to Satan, to punish him by the inordinate love of it? Then it is that he is more and more tormented by that *auri sacra fames!* That execrable hunger after gold, which can never be satisfied! No. It is most true, as the very heathen observes:—"Crescit amor nummi, quantum ipsa pecunia crescit."—As money, so the love of money grows; it increases in the same proportion. As in a dropsy, the more you drink, the more you thirst; till that unquenchable thirst plunge you into the fire, which never shall be quenched.

15. But is there no way, you may ask, either to prevent or to cure this dire disease? There is one preventive of it, which is also a remedy for it: and I believe there is no other under heaven. It is this. After you have *gained* (with the cautions above given) *all you can*, and *saved all you can*, wanting for nothing: spend not one pound, one shilling, or one penny, to gratify either the desire of the flesh, the desire of the eyes, or the pride of life; or indeed,

for any other end than to please and glorify God. Having avoided this rock on the right hand, beware of that on the left. Secondly, *hoard nothing*. Lay up no treasure on earth, but *give all you can*, that is, all you have. I defy all the men upon earth, yea all the angels in heaven, to find any other way of extracting the poison from riches.

16. Let me add one word more. After having served you between sixty and seventy years; with dim eyes, shaking hands, and tottering feet, I give you one more advice before I sink into the dust. Mark those words of St. Paul, "Those that desire (or endeavour) to be rich, (that moment) fall into temptation," yea a deep gulf of temptation, out of which nothing less than Almighty Power can deliver them. "They fall into a snare:" the word properly means *a steel trap*, which instantly crushes the animal taken to pieces! "and into divers foolish and hurtful desires, which plunge men into destruction and perdition." You, above all men, who now prosper in the world, never forget these awful words! How unspeakably slippery is your path! How dangerous every step! The Lord God enable you to see your danger, and make you deeply sensible of it. O may you "awake up after his likeness, and be satisfied with it!"

17. Permit me to come a little closer still. Perhaps I may not trouble you any more on this head. I am pained for you that are "rich in this world." Do you give all you can? You who receive five hundred pounds a year, and spend only two hundred, do you give three hundred back to God? If not, you certainly rob God of that three hundred. You that receive two hundred, and spend but one, do you give God the other hundred? If not, you rob him of just so much. "Nay, may I not do what I will with *my own?*" Here lies the ground of your mistake. It is not your *own*. It cannot be, unless you are Lord of heaven and earth. "However I must provide for my children." Certainly. But how? By making them rich? Then you will probably make them heathens, as some of you have done already. "What shall I do then?" Lord,

speak to their hearts! Else the Preacher speaks in vain. Leave them enough to live on, not in idleness and luxury, but by honest industry. And if you have not children, upon what scripture or rational principle, can you leave a groat behind you more than will bury you? I pray consider, what are you the better for what you leave behind you? What does it signify; whether you leave behind you ten thousand pounds, or ten thousand shoes and boots? O! leave nothing behind you! Send all you have before you into a better world! Lend it, lend it all unto the Lord, and it shall be paid you again! Is there any danger that *his* truth should fail? It is fixed as the pillars of heaven. Haste, haste, my Brethren, haste! lest you be called away, before you have settled what you have on this security! When this is done, you may boldly say, "Now I have nothing to do but to die! Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit! Come, Lord Jesus! Come quickly."

BRISTOL, *Sept.* 21, 1790.

SERMON CXXVIII.

TRUE CHRISTIANITY DEFENDED.

THE following SERMON was found in a mutilated Manuscript among Mr. WESLEY's papers. It is dated June 24, 1741. A Latin Copy of the same Discourse has also been discovered. Mr. Pawson, with great care, copied the former, and I have supplied the deficiencies out of the latter. On collating both Sermons, I find several variations, and though not of any great importance, yet sufficient, in my judgment, to vindicate the propriety of translating and publishing the Latin one, not merely as a matter of curiosity, but of utility. The Sermon, no doubt, was written with the design of being preached before the University of Oxford: but whether it ever were preached there, cannot be determined.*

A. CLARKE.

ISAIAH I. 21.

"How is the faithful City become an Harlot!"

1. "WHEN I bring the sword upon a land, saith the Lord, if the watchman blow the trumpet, and warn the people; then whosoever heareth the sound of the trumpet, and taketh not warning; if the sword come and take him away, his blood shall be upon his own head. But if the watchman see the sword come, and blow not the trumpet,

* It appears, I think, very probable, not to say certain, from Mr. Wesley's Journal, for that year, that he did preach this Sermon at Oxford before the University. For he went thither on Wednesday, June 17, and on Thursday 18, observes, "I advised with Mr. Gambold concerning the subject of my sermon before the University. But he seemed to think it of no moment: 'For,' said he, 'all here are so prejudiced against you, that they will mind nothing you say.' I know not that," replies Mr. Wesley, "However, I am to deliver my own soul, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear." A part of some of the following days he seems to have employed

and the people be not warned; if the sword come, and take any person from among them, he is taken away in his iniquity, but his blood will I require at the watchman's hand." Ezek. xxxiii. 2—6.

2. It cannot be doubted, but that word of the Lord is come unto every Minister of Christ also. "So thou, O son of man, I have set thee a Watchman unto the house of Israel: Therefore thou shalt hear the word at my mouth, and warn them from me. When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die: if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand."

3. Nor ought any man therefore to be counted our enemy because he telleth us the truth: The doing of which is indeed an instance of love to our neighbour, as well as of obedience to God. Otherwise few would undertake so thankless a task: For the return they will find, they know already. The Scripture must be fulfilled. "Me the world hateth," saith our Lord, "because I testify of it that the deeds thereof are evil."

4. It is from a full, settled conviction, that I owe this labour of love to my Brethren, and to my tender Parent,* by whom I have been nourished for now more than twenty

in writing the sermon, and probably in translating it into Latin, and to have finished it on Wednesday 24, the day it is dated. On which day he says, "I read over and partly transcribed, Bishop Bull's Harmonica Apostolica. The position with which he sets out is this; 'That *all good works*, and *not faith alone*, are the necessarily previous *condition of Justification*,' or the forgiveness of our sins. But in the middle of the treatise he asserts, 'That *faith alone is the condition of Justification*;' 'For *faith*,' says he, 'referred to Justification, *means all* inward and outward *good works*. In the latter end he affirms, "That there are *two justifications*: and that *only inward good works* necessarily precede the *former*, but both *inward and outward* the *latter*.'" The reader will find these sentiments of Bishop Bull stated more at large in the sermon. Mr. Wesley returned to London, on Saturday 27, but went back to Oxford on the 30th, and continued there about a fortnight, during which time he probably preached the sermon. J. Benson.

* The University of Oxford.

years, and from whom, under God, I have received those advantages, of which, I trust, I shall retain a grateful sense, till my spirit returns to God who gave it. It is, I say, from a full conviction, that love and gratitude, as well as that dispensation of the Gospel wherewith I am entrusted, require it of me, that even I have undertaken to speak on a needful, though unwelcome subject. I would indeed have wished that some more acceptable person would have done this. But should all hold their peace, the very stones would cry out, "How is the faithful city become an harlot!"

5. How faithful she once was to her Lord, to whom she had been betrothed as a chaste virgin, let not only the writings of her sons, which shall be had in honour throughout all generations, but also the blood of her martyrs speak; a stronger testimony of her faithfulness than could be given by words, even

"By all the speeches of the babbling earth."

But how is she now become an harlot? How hath she departed from her Lord! How hath she denied him, and listened to the voice of strangers, both

I. In respect of Doctrine, and,

II. Of Practice.

I. In respect of Doctrine. 1. It cannot be said, that all our Writers are setters forth of strange Doctrines. There are those who expound the Oracles of God, by the same Spirit wherewith they were written: and who faithfully cleave to the solid foundation which our Church hath laid agreeable thereto; touching which we have his word who cannot lie, "That the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." There are those also, (blessed be the Author of every good gift,) who as wise master-builders, build thereon not hay or stubble, but gold and precious stones; but that charity which never faileth.

2. We have likewise cause to give thanks to the Father of Lights, for that he hath not left himself without witness, but that there are those who now preach the Gospel of Peace, the truth as it is in Jesus. But how few are these in

comparison of those (οι καπηλευοντες) who *adulterate* the word of God! How little wholesome food have we for our souls, and what abundance of poison! How few are there that, either in writing or preaching, declare the genuine Gospel of Christ, in the simplicity and purity wherewith it is set forth in the venerable Records of our own Church! And how are we inclosed on every side with those who, neither knowing the Doctrines of our Church, nor the Scriptures, nor the power of God, have found out to themselves inventions wherewith they constantly corrupt others also!

3. I speak not now of those (πρωτοτοκοι του Σατανα) *first-born of Satan*, the Deists, Arians, or Socinians. These are too infamous among us, to do any great service to the cause of their Master. But what shall we say of those who are accounted the Pillars of our Church, and Champions of our faith, who indeed betray that Church, and sap the very foundations of the Faith we are taught thereby?

4. But how invidious a thing it is to shew this! Who is sufficient to bear the weight of prejudice which must necessarily follow the very mention of such a charge against men of so established a character? Nay, and who have indeed, in many other respects, done great service to the Church of God? Yet must every faithful minister say, "God forbid that I should accept any man's person. I dare not give any man flattering titles, not spare any that corrupt the Gospel. In so doing my Maker would soon take me away."

5. Let me, however, be as short as may be upon this head; and I will instance only in two or three men of renown, who have endeavoured to sap the very foundation of our Church, by attacking its fundamental, and indeed the fundamental Doctrine of all the Reformed Churches, viz. Justification by Faith alone.

One of these, and one of the highest station in our Church, hath written and printed before his death, several Sermons, expressly to prove, that not *Faith alone*, but *Good Works* also, are necessary in order to Justification. The unpleasing task of quoting particular passages out of them is superseded by the very title of them, which is this,

"The necessity of Regeneration, (which he at large proves to imply holiness both of heart and life,) in order to Justification."*

6. It may appear strange to some, that an angel of the Church of God, (as the great Shepherd terms the overseers of it,) and one so highly esteemed both in our own and many other nations, should coolly and calmly thus speak. But, O! what is he in comparison of the great Bishop Bull! Who shall be able to stand, if this eminent scholar, Christian, and prelate, in his youth wrote and published to the world, and in his riper years defended the positions that follow.

"A man is said (εξ εργων δικαιουσθαι,) *to be justified by works;* because good works are the condition, according to the divine appointment, established in the Gospel Covenant, requisite and necessary to a man's justification; that is, to his obtaining remission of sins through Christ." Bulli Harm. Apost. p. 4.

A little after, being about to produce testimonies in proof of this proposition, he says, "The first class of these shall be those who speak of good works in a general sense, as the requisite and necessary condition of Justification." Then follow certain texts of Scripture, after which he adds, "Who does not believe that in these scriptures there is an abundance of good works required, which if a man do not perform, he is altogether excluded from the hope of pardon, and remission of sins." Ibid. p. 6.

Having introduced some other things, he adds, "Besides *Faith*, there is no one but may see, that *Repentance* is required as necessary to Justification. Now, Repentance is not one work alone, but is, as it were, a collection of many others: for in its compass the following works are comprehended. 1. Sorrow on account of sin. 2. Humiliation under the hand of God. 3. Hatred to sin. 4. Confession of sin. 5. Ardent supplication of the Divine Mercy. 6. The love of God. 7. Ceasing from sin. 8. Firm pur-

* Tillotson's Sermons, Vol. I. &c.

pose of new obedience. 9. Restitution of ill-gotten goods. 10. Forgiving our neighbour his transgressions against us. 11. Works of beneficence or alms-giving. How much these things avail to procure remission of sins from God is sufficiently evident from Dan. iv. 24, where the prophet gives this wholesome advice to Nebuchadnezzar, who was at that time cleaving to his sins; "Redeem* your sins by alms-giving, and your iniquities by shewing mercy to the poor." Ib. p. 10.

7. To instance in one point more. All the Liturgy of the Church is full of petitions for that holiness without which, the Scripture every where declares, no man shall see the Lord. And these are all summed up in those comprehensive words which we are supposed to be so frequently repeating: "Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love thee, and worthily magnify thy holy Name." It is evident, that in the last clause of this petition, all outward holiness is contained: neither can it be carried to a greater height, or expressed in stronger terms. And those words, "Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts," contain the negative branch of inward holiness: the height and depth of which is Purity of Heart, by the inspiration of God's Holy Spirit: the remaining words, "That we may perfectly love thee," contain the positive part of Holiness: seeing this Love, which is the fulfilling of the Law, implies, the whole mind that was in Christ.

8. But how does the general stream of Writers and Preachers (let me be excused the invidious task of instancing in particular persons) agree with this doctrine? Indeed, not at all. Very few can we find who simply and earnestly enforce it. But very many who write and preach as if Christian Holiness, or Religion, were a purely negative thing; as if, not to curse or swear, not to lie or slander, not to be a drunkard, a thief, or a whoremonger, not to speak

* The Bishop translates פרק, *peruk*, with the Vulgate, *redeem* or *buy off*, but the proper and literal meaning is *break off*. A. C.

or do evil, was religion enough to entitle a man to heaven! How many, if they go something farther than this, describe it only as an outward thing! As if it consisted chiefly, if not wholly, in doing good, (as it is called,) and using the means of grace! Or should they go a little further still, yet what do they add to this poor account of Religion? Why, perhaps, that a man should be orthodox in his opinions, and have a zeal for the constitution in Church and State. And this is all! This is all the religion they can allow without degenerating into enthusiasm! So true it is, That the faith of a devil and the life of a heathen, make up what most men call a *good Christian!*

9. But why should we seek further witnesses of this? Are there not many present here who are of the same opinion? Who believe that a good moral man and a good Christian mean the same thing? That a man need not trouble himself any further, if he only practises as much Christianity as was written over the Heathen Emperor's gate, "Do as thou wouldst be done unto." Especially if he be not an infidel or an heretic, but believes all that the Bible and the Church says is true.

10. I would not be understood, as if I despised these things, as if I undervalued right opinions, true morality, or a zealous regard for the constitution we have received from our fathers. Yet what are these things being alone? What will they profit us in that day? What will it avail to tell the Judge of All, "Lord, I was not as other men were; not unjust, not an adulterer, not a liar, not an immoral man." Yea, what will it avail, if we have done all good, as well as done no harm? If we have given all our goods to feed the poor, and have not Charity? How shall we then look on those who taught us to sleep on and take our rest, though *the Love of the Father was not in us?* Or who, teaching us to seek salvation by works, cut us off from receiving that Faith freely, whereby alone the Love of God could have been shed abroad in our hearts?

To these miserable corrupters of the Gospel of Christ, and the poison they have spread abroad, is chiefly owing,

II. Secondly, That general corruption in practice as well as in doctrine. There is hardly to be found, (O tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Askelon,) either the form of Godliness, or the power! So is the faithful city become an harlot!

1. With grief of heart I speak it, and not with joy, that scarcely is the form of godliness seen among us. We are all indeed called to be Saints, and the very name of Christians means no less. But who has so much as the appearance? Take any one you meet: take a second, a third, a fourth, or the twentieth. Not one of them has even the appearance of a saint, any more than of an angel. Observe his look, his air, his gesture! Does it breathe nothing but God? Does it bespeak a temple of the Holy Ghost? Observe his conversation; not an hour only, but day by day. Can you gather from any outward sign, That God dwelleth in his heart? That this is an everlasting spirit, who is going to God? Would you imagine that the blood of Christ was shed for that soul, and had purchased everlasting salvation for it, and that God was now waiting till that salvation should be wrought out with fear and trembling?

2. Should it be said, Why what signifies the form of godliness? We readily answer, Nothing, if it be alone. But the absence of the form signifies much. It infallibly proves the absence of the power. For though the form may be without the power, yet the power cannot be without the form. Outward religion cannot be where inward is not: but if there is none without, there can be none within.

3. But it may be said, We have public prayers, both morning and evening, in all our Colleges. It is true, and it were to be wished that all the members thereof, more especially the elder, those of note and character, would, by constantly attending them, shew how sensible they are of that invaluable privilege. But have all who attend them the form of Godliness? Before those solemn addresses to God begin, does the behaviour of all who are present, show, That they know before whom they stand? What

impression appears to be left on their minds when those holy offices are ended? And even during their continuance; can it be reasonably inferred from the tenor of their outward behaviour, that their hearts are earnestly fixed on Him who standeth in the midst of them? I much fear, were a heathen, who understood not our tongue, to come into one of these our assemblies, he would suspect nothing less, than that we were pouring out our hearts before the Majesty of heaven and earth. What then shall we say, if indeed God is not mocked; but what a man soweth, that also shall he reap?

4. On Sundays, however, say some, it cannot be denied that we have the form of godliness, having sermons preached both morning and afternoon, over and above the morning and evening service. But do we keep the rest of the sabbath-day holy? Is there no needless visiting upon it? No trifling? No impertinence of conversation? Do neither you yourself do any unnecessary work upon it, nor suffer others, over whom you have any power, to break the Laws of God and man herein? If you do, even in this you have nothing whereof to boast. But herein also you are guilty before God.

5. But if we have the form of Godliness on one day in a week, is there not on other days what is quite contrary thereto? Are not the best of our conversing hours spent in foolish talking and jesting, which are not convenient? Nay, perhaps, in wanton talking too, such as modest ears could not bear? Are there not many among us found to eat and drink with the drunken? And if so, what marvel is it that our profaneness should also go up into the heavens, and our oaths and curses into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth?

6. And even as to the hours assigned for study, are they generally spent to any better purpose? Not if they are employed in reading (as is too common) plays, novels, or idle tales, which naturally tend to increase our inbred corruption, and heat the furnace of our unholy desires, seven times hotter than it was before! How little preferable is the laborious idleness of those who spend day after day in

gaming or diversions, vilely casting away that time, the value of which they cannot know, till they are past through it into Eternity!

7. Know ye not then so much as this, you that are called moral men, that all idleness is immorality? That there is no grosser dishonesty than sloth? That every voluntary blockhead is a knave. He defrauds his benefactors, his parents, and the world, and robs both God and his own soul. Yet how many of these are among us! How many lazy drones, as if only, *Fruges consumere nati!* Born to eat up the produce of the soil. How many whose ignorance is not owing to incapacity, but to mere laziness! How few, (let it not seem immodest that even such an one as I should touch on that tender point,) of the vast number who have it in their power, are truly learned men! Not to speak of the other Eastern Tongues, who is there that can be said to understand Hebrew? Might I not say, or even Greek? A little of Homer, or Xenophon, we may still remember; but how few can readily read or understand so much as a page of Clemens Alexandrinus, Chrysostom, or Ephrem Syrus? And as to Philosophy, (not to mention Mathematics, or the abstruser branches of it,) how few do we find who have laid the foundation, who are masters even of Logic? Who thoroughly understand so much as the rules of syllogizing? The very doctrine of the Moods and Figures? O what is so scarce as learning, save religion!

8. And indeed learning will be seldom found without religion, for temporal views, as experience shows, will very rarely suffice, to carry any one through the labour required to be a thorough scholar. Can it then be dissembled that there is too often a defect in those to whom the care of youth is intrusted? Is that solemn direction sufficiently considered, (Statut. p. 7,) *Let the Tutor diligently instruct those scholars committed to his care in strict morality, and especially in the first principles of Religion, and in the Articles of Doctrine.*

And do they to whom this important charge is given, labour diligently to lay this good foundation? To fix true

principles of religion, in the minds of the youth intrusted with them, by their Lectures? To recommend the practice thereof by the powerful and pleasing influence of their example? To enforce this by frequent private advice, earnestly and strongly inculcated? To observe the progress, and carefully inquire into the behaviour, of every one of them? In a word, to watch over their souls, as they that must give account?

9. Suffer me, since I have begun to speak upon this head, to go a little farther. Is there sufficient care taken that they should know and keep the Statutes which we are all engaged to observe? How then is it that they are so notoriously broken every day? To instance only in a few:

It is appointed, as to divine offices and preaching, "That ALL shall publicly attend:—Graduates and scholars shall attend punctually, and continue till all be finished, with due reverence from the beginning to the end." P. 181.

It is appointed, "That scholars of every rank, shall abstain from all kinds of play where money is contended for; such as cards, dice, and bowls, nor shall they be present at public games of this nature." P. 157.

It is appointed, "That all (the sons of noblemen excepted) shall accustom themselves to black or dark coloured clothing; and that they shall keep at the utmost distance from pomp and extravagance." P. 157.

It is appointed, "That scholars of every rank shall abstain from alehouses, inns, taverns, and from every place within the city where wine, or any other kind of liquor is ordinarily sold." P. 164.

10. It will be objected, perhaps, "That these are but little things." Nay, but perjury is not a little thing: nor consequently the wilful breach of any rule, which we have solemnly sworn to observe. Surely those who speak thus have forgotten those words, *Thou shalt pledge thy faith to observe all the statutes of this University. So help thee God, and the holy inspired Gospels of Christ!*" P. 229.

11. But is this oath sufficiently considered by those who take it? Or any of those prescribed by public authority?

Is not this solemn act of religion, the calling God to record on our souls, commonly treated as a slight thing? In particular by those who swear by the living God, *That neither intreaties nor reward: neither hatred nor friendship: neither hope nor fear, induce them to give a testimony to any unworthy person?* P. 88. And by those who swear, *I know this person to be meet and fit in morals and knowledge for that high degree to which he is presented?* P. 114.

12. Yet one thing more. We have all testified before God, "That all and every the Articles of our Church, as also the book of Common Prayer, and the Ordaining of Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, are agreeable to the Word of God." And in so doing we have likewise testified, "That both the first and the second book of Homilies, doth contain godly and wholesome doctrine." But upon what evidence have many of us declared this? Have we not affirmed the thing we know not? If so, however true they may happen to be, we are found false witnesses before God. Have the greater part of us ever used any means to know whether these things are so or not? Have we ever for one hour, seriously considered the Articles to which we have subscribed? If not, how shamefully do we elude the design of the very Compilers who compiled them, "To remove difference of opinion, and to establish unanimity in the true Religion?"

13. Have we half of us read over the book of Common-Prayer, and of ordaining Bishops, Priests, and Deacons? If not, what is it we have so solemnly confirmed? In plain terms, we cannot tell. And as to the two Books of Homilies, it is well if a tenth part of those who have subscribed to them, I will not say, had considered them before they did this, but if they have even read them over to this day! Alas, my brethren! How shall we reconcile these things even to common honesty, to plain heathen morality? So far as those who do them, nay, and perhaps defend them too, from having even the form of Christian Godliness!

14. But waving all these things, where is the Power? Who are the living witnesses of this? Who among us (let

God witness with our hearts) experimentally knows the force of inward holiness? Who feels in himself the workings of the Spirit of Christ, drawing up his mind to high and heavenly things? Who can witness,—"The thoughts of my heart God hath cleansed by the inspiration of his Holy Spirit?" Who knoweth that "Peace of God which passeth all understanding?" Who is he that "rejoiceth with joy unspeakable and full of glory?" Whose "affections are set on things above, not on things of the earth?" Whose "life is hid with Christ in God?" Who can say, "I am crucified with Christ: yet I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life that I now live in the body, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me?" In whose heart is the "love of God shed abroad, by the Holy Ghost which is given unto him."

15. Is not almost the very notion of this religion lost? Is there not a gross overflowing ignorance of it? Nay, is it not utterly despised? Is it not wholly set at nought and trodden underfoot? Were any one to witness these things before God, would he not be accounted a madman, an enthusiast? Am not I unto you a Barbarian who speak thus? My brethren, my heart bleeds for you. O that you would at length take knowledge, and understand that these are the words of truth and soberness! O that you knew, at least, in this your day, the things that make for your peace!

16. I have been a messenger of heavy tidings this day. But the love of Christ constraineth me; and to me it was the less grievous, because for you it was safe. I desire not to accuse the children of my people. Therefore neither do I speak thus in the ears of them that sit on the wall: but to you I endeavour to speak the truth in love, as a faithful minister of Jesus Christ. And I can now call you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God.

17. May the God of all Grace, who is long-suffering, of

tender mercy, and repenteth him of the evil, fix these things in your hearts, and water the seed he hath sown with the dew of Heaven! May he correct whatsoever he seeth amiss in us! May he supply whatsoever is wanting! May he perfect that which is according to his Will; and so establish, strengthen, and settle us, that this place may again be a faithful City to her Lord, yea, the praise of the whole earth!

JUNE 24, 1741.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Reader will observe, that the following Sermons were written, and most of them preached soon after Mr. Wesley's Ordination, while he was yet young, and but very imperfectly acquainted with the genuine Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Nevertheless it is judged proper to subjoin them to the preceding; 1st, In order to gratify those of his friends who wish to see a complete Edition of his Sermons; 2dly, Because although they do not exhibit the grand and distinguishing doctrines of the Gospel in that luminous and convincing point of view, in which they are set forth in the preceding Discourses, written after he became savingly acquainted with vital Christianity; yet it is hoped that the important truths which they contain will prove edifying to every unprejudiced Reader: a 3d reason for publishing them is, That while they manifest his great sincerity and zeal in pursuit of the religion of the Bible, they show also, taken in the order in which they were written and in which they here appear, how his mind was gradually opened more and more to the whole truth as it is in Jesus; so that when he wrote the last of them, preached before the University of Oxford, after his return from Georgia in the year 1736, he was evidently acquainted with the nature and necessity of Regeneration by the Spirit of God, and was on the point of entering into the liberty of his Children through faith in Christ Jesus.

LONDON, *June* 22, 1808. JOSEPH BENSON.

SERMON CXXIX.

The following Sermon of Mr. Wesley, was preached at Epworth, Jan. 11, 1726, at the Funeral of John Griffith, a hopeful young Man, Son of one of his Parishioners.

2 SAMUEL XII. 23.

"*Now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him; but he shall not return to me.*"

THE resolution of a wise and good man, just recovering the use of his reason and virtue, after the bitterness of soul he had tasted, from the hourly expectation of the death of a

beloved son, is comprised in these few, but strong words. He had fasted and wept, and lay all night upon the earth, and refused, not only comfort, but even needful sustenance, whilst the child was still alive, in hopes that God would be gracious, as well in that, as in other instances, and reverse the just sentence he had pronounced: when it was put in execution, in the death of the child, he arose and changed his apparel, having first paid his devotions to his Great Master, acknowledging, no doubt, the mildness of his severity, and owning, with gratitude and humility, the obligation laid upon him, in that he was not consumed, as well as chastened by his heavy hand; he then came into his house, and behaved with his usual composure and cheerfulness. The reason of this strange alteration in his proceedings, as it appeared to those who were ignorant of the principles upon which he acted, he here explains, with great brevity, but in the most beautiful language, strength of thought, and energy of expression: "Now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me."

To what end, (saith the resigned mourner,) should I fast, now the child is dead? Why should I add grief to grief, which being a volunteer, increases the affliction I already sustain? Would it not be equally useless to him and me? Have my tears or complaints the power to refix his soul in her decayed and forsaken mansion? Or, indeed, would he wish to change, though the power were in his hands, the happy regions of which he is now possessed, for this land of care, pain, and misery? O vain thought! Never can he, never will he return to me: be it my comfort, my constant comfort, when my sorrows bear hard upon me, that I shall shortly, very shortly go to him! That I shall soon awake from this tedious dream of life, which will soon be at an end; and then shall I gaze upon him: then shall I behold him again, and behold him with that perfect love, that sincere and elevated affection to which even the heart of a parent is here a stranger! When the Lord God shall wipe away all tears from my eyes; and the least part of my

happiness shall be, that the sorrow of absence shall flee away!

The unprofitable and bad consequences, the sinful nature of profuse sorrowing for the dead, is easily deduced from the former part of this reflection: in the latter, we have the strongest motives to enforce our striving against it; a remedy exactly suited to the disease: a consideration, which duly applied, will not fail, either to prevent this sorrow, or rescue us from this real misfortune.

Grief, in general, is the parent of so much evil, and the occasion of so little good to mankind, that it may be justly wondered how it found a place in our nature. It was, indeed, of man's own, not of God's creation; who may permit, but never was the author of evil. The same hour gave birth to grief and sin, as the same moment will deliver us from both. For neither did exist before human nature was corrupted; nor will it continue when that is restored to its ancient perfection.

Indeed in this present state of things, that wise Being, who knows well how to extract good out of evil, has shewn us one way of making this universal frailty, highly conducive both to our virtue and happiness. Even grief, if it lead us to repentance, and proceed from a serious sense of our faults, is not to be repented of, since those, who thus sow in tears, shall reap in joy. If we confine it to this particular occasion, it does not impair, but greatly assists our imperfect reason: pain, either of body or mind, acting quicker than reflection, and fixing more deeply in the memory any circumstance it attends.

From the very nature of grief, which is an uneasiness in the mind, on the apprehension of some present evil, it appears, that its arising in us, on any other occasion, than that of sin, is entirely owing to our want of judgment. Are any of those accidents, in the language of men, termed misfortunes, such as reproach, poverty, loss of life, or even of friends, real evils? So far from it, that if we dare believe our Creator, they are often positive blessings. They all work together for our good. And our Lord accordingly

commands us, even when the severest loss, that of our reputation, befalls us, if it is in a good cause, as it must be our own fault if it be not, "To rejoice, and be exceedingly glad."

But what fully proves the utter absurdity of almost all our grief, except that for our own failings, is, that the occasion of it is always past before it begins. To recall what has already been, is utterly impossible, and beyond the reach of Omnipotence itself. Let those who are fond of misery, if any such there be, indulge their minds in this fruitless inquietude. They who desire happiness will have a care how they cherish such a passion, as is neither desirable in itself, nor serves to any good purpose, present or future.

If any species of this unprofitable passion be more particularly useless than the rest, it is that which we feel when we sorrow for the dead. We destroy the health of our body, and impair the strength of our minds, and take no price for those invaluable blessings: we give up our present without any prospect of future advantage, without any probability of either recalling them hither, or profiting them where they are.

As it is an indifferent proof of our wisdom, it is still a worse of our affection for the dead. It is the property of envy, not of love, to repine at another's happiness; to weep, because all tears are wiped from their eyes! Shall it disturb us, who call ourselves his friends, that a weary wanderer has, at length, come to his wished for home? Nay, weep we rather for ourselves, who still want that happiness, even to whom that rest appeareth yet in prospect.

Gracious is our God and merciful, who knowing what is in man, that *passion* when it has conquered reason, always takes the appearance of it; lest we should be misled by this appearance, adds the sanction of his unerring commands, to the natural dictates of our own understanding. The judgment, perhaps, might be so clouded by passion, as to think it reasonable to be profuse in our sorrow at parting from a

beloved object: but Revelation tells us, that all occurrences of life must be borne with patience and moderation, (otherwise we lay a greater weight on our own souls, than external accidents can do, without our concurrence:) with humility, because from the offended Justice of God we might well have expected he would have inflicted much worse; and with resignation, because we know, whatsoever happens is for our good: and although it were not, we are not able to contend with, and should not, therefore, provoke him that is stronger than we.

Against this fault, which is inconsistent with those virtues, and, therefore, tacitly forbidden in the precepts that enjoin them, St. Paul warns us in express words, "I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died, and rose again, even also them who sleep in Jesus will God bring with him:—Wherefore comfort one another with these words," 1 Thess. iv. 13, 18. And these, indeed, are the only words which can give lasting comfort to a spirit, whom such an occasion hath wounded. Why should I be so unreasonable, so unkind, as to desire the return of a soul, now in happiness, to me, to this habitation of sin and misery; since I know that the time will come, yea, is now at hand, when in spite of the great gulf fixed between us, I shall shake off these chains and go to him?

What he was, I am both unable to paint in suitable colours, and unwilling to attempt it. Although the chief, at least the most common argument, for those laboured encomiums on the dead, which for many years have so much prevailed among us, is, that there can be no suspicion of flattery: yet we all know, that the pulpit, on those occasions, has been so frequently prostituted to those servile ends, that it is now no longer capable of serving them. Men take it for granted, that what is there said, are words of course: that the business of the speaker is to describe the beauty, not the likeness of the picture: and so it be only well drawn, he cares not whom it resembles.

In a word, that his business is to show his own wit, not the generosity of his friend, by giving him all the virtues he can think on.

This, indeed, is an end that is visibly served in those ill-timed commendations; of what other use they are, it is hard to say. It is of no service to the dead, to celebrate his actions: since he has the applause of God, and his holy angels, and also that of his own conscience. And it is of very little use to the living. Since he who desires a pattern, may find enough proposed as such in the sacred writings. What, must one be raised from the dead to instruct him, whilst Moses, the Prophets, and the blessed Jesus, are still presented to his view in those everlasting Tables? Certain it is, that he who will not imitate these, would not be converted, though one literally rose from the dead.

Let it suffice to have paid my last duty to him, (whether he is now hovering over these lower regions, or retired already to the mansions of eternal glory,) by saying, in a few plain words, such as were his own, and were always agreeable to him, that he was to his parents, an affectionate dutiful son; to his acquaintance, an ingenious, cheerful, good-natured companion: and to me, a well-tried, sincere friend.

At such a loss, if considered without the alleviating circumstances, who can blame him that drops a tear? The tender meltings of an heart dissolved with fondness, when it reflects on the several agreeable moments, which have now taken their flight, never to return, gives an authority to some degree of sorrow. Nor will human frailty permit an ordinary acquaintance to take his last leave of them without it. Who then can conceive, much less describe, the strong emotion, the secret workings of soul, which a parent feels on such an occasion? None, surely, but those who are parents themselves: unless those few who have experienced the power of friendship, than which, human nature on this side of the grave, knows no closer, no softer, no stronger tie!

At the tearing asunder of these sacred bands, well may we allow, without blame, some parting pangs: but the difficulty is, to put as speedy a period to them, as reason and religion command us. What can give us sufficient ease, after that rupture, which has left such an aching void in our breasts? What, indeed, but the reflection already mentioned, which can never be inculcated too often; that we are hastening to him ourselves: that,—pass but a few years, perhaps hours, which will soon be over, and not only this, but all other desires will be satisfied! When we shall exchange the gaudy shadow of pleasure we have enjoyed, for sincere, substantial, untransitory happiness!

With this consideration well imprinted in our minds, it is far better, as Solomon observes, to go to the house of mourning, than to the house of feasting. The one unbraces the soul, disarms our resolution, and lays us open to an attack. The other, cautions us to recollect our reason, and stand upon our guard, and infuses that noble steadiness, and seriousness of temper, which it is not in the power of an ordinary stroke to discompose. Such objects naturally induce us to lay it to heart, that the next summons may be our own! and that, since death is the end of all men, without exception, it is high time for the living to lay it to heart.

If we are, at any time, in danger of being overcome, by dwelling too long on the gloomy side of this prospect, to the giving us pain, the making us unfit for the duties and offices of life, impairing our faculties of body or mind, which proceedings, as has been already shewn, are both absurd, unprofitable, and sinful: let us immediately recur to the bright side, and reflect, with gratitude as well as humility, that our time passeth away like a shadow; and that, when we awake from this momentary dream, we shall then have a clearer view of that latter day, in which our Redeemer shall stand upon the earth: when this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall be clothed with immortality: and when we shall sing, with the united choirs of men and angels, "O Death, where is thy sting? O Grave, where is thy victory?"

SERMON CXXX.

ON CORRUPTING THE WORD OF GOD.

THE FOLLOWING SERMON WAS PREACHED ABOUT THE YEAR 1728.

2 Cor. II. 17.

"*We are not as many, who corrupt the Word of God; but as of Sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ.*"

MANY have observed, that nothing conduces more to a Preacher's success with those that hear him, than a general good opinion of his Sincerity. Nothing gives him a greater force of persuasion than this; nothing creates either a greater attention in the hearers, or a greater disposition to improve. When they really believe that he has no other end in speaking, but what he fairly carries in view, and that he is willing that they should see all the steps he takes for the attainment of that end,—it must give them a strong presumption, both that what he seeks is good, and the method in which he seeks it.

But how to possess them with this belief, is the question. How shall we bring them to take notice of our sincerity, if they do not advert to it of themselves? One good way, however common, is frankly and openly to profess it. There is something in these professions, when they come from the heart, strongly insinuating into the hearts of others. Persons of any generosity that hear them, find themselves almost forced to believe them; and even those who believe

them not, are obliged in prudence, not to let their incredulity appear, since it is a known rule—The honester any man is, the less apt is he to suspect another. The consequence whereof is plain. Whoever, without proof, is suspicious of his neighbour's sincerity, gives a probable proof, that he judges of his heart, from the falseness of his own.

Would not any man be tempted to suspect his integrity, who, without proof, suspected the want of it in another, that had fairly and openly professed the principles on which he acted? Surely none, but such as had corrupted the Word of God, or wished that it were corrupted, could lightly suspect either St. Paul of doing it, or any that after him should use his generous declaration, "We are not as many, who corrupt the word of God; but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ."

Not that the Apostle, any more than his followers in preaching the gospel, desires the people wholly to rely on his words. For afterwards he appeals to his actions to confirm them. And those who in this can imitate him, need not to intreat men to believe their sincerity. If our works bear the stamp of it, as well as our words, both together will speak so loudly and plainly, that every unprejudiced person must understand that we speak in Christ, as in sincerity, and that in so doing we consider we are in the sight of that God, whose commission we bear.

Those whom the Apostle accuses of the contrary practice, of corrupting the word of God, seem to have been Jews, who owned Jesus to be the Christ, and his gospel to be divine, yet adulterated it, by intermingling with it the Law of Moses, and their own traditions. And in doing this, their principal view was to make a gain of Christ; which, consequently, laid them under a necessity of concealing the end they proposed, as well as the means they used in order to obtain it. On the contrary, those who intend the good of mankind, are by no means concerned to hide their intentions. If the benefit we propose in speaking be to ourselves, it is often our interest to keep it

private. If the benefit we propose be to others, it is always our interest to make it public; and it is the interest both of ourselves and others, to make public those marks of distinction whence may clearly be known who corrupt the Word of God, and who preach it in sincerity.

The first and great mark of one who corrupts the Word of God, is introducing into it human mixtures; either the errors of others, or the fancies of his own brain. To do this, is to corrupt it in the highest degree. To blend with the Oracles of God, impure dreams fit only for the mouth of the devil! And yet it has been so frequently done, that scarce ever was any erroneous opinion either invented or received, but Scripture was quoted to defend it. And when the imposture was too bare-faced, and the texts cited for it appeared too plainly either to make against it, or to be nothing to the purpose; then recourse has usually been had to a second method of corrupting it, by mixing it with false interpretations. And this is done, sometimes, by repeating the words wrong: and sometimes, by repeating them right, but putting a wrong sense upon them. One that is either strained and unnatural, or foreign to the writer's intention in the place from whence they are taken. Perhaps contrary either to his intention in that very place, or to what he says in some other part of his writings. And this is easily effected: any passage is easily perverted, by being recited singly, without any of the preceding or following verses. By this means it may often seem to have one sense, when it will be plain, by observing what goes before and what follows after, that it really has the direct contrary. For want of observing which, unwary souls are liable to be tossed about with every wind of doctrine, whenever they fall into the hands of those who have enough of wickedness and cunning, thus to adulterate what they preach, and to add now and then a plausible comment, to make it go down the more easily.

A third sort of those who corrupt the Word of God, though in a lower degree than either of the former, are those who do so, not by adding to it, but by taking from it.

Who take either the spirit or substance of it away, while they study to prophesy only smooth things, and, therefore, palliate or colour what they preach, in order to reconcile it to the taste of the hearers. And that they may do this the better, they commonly let those parts go that will admit of no colouring. They wash their hands of those stubborn texts, that will not bend to their purpose, or that too plainly touch upon the reigning vices of the place where they are. These they exchange for those more soft and tractable ones, that are not so apt to give offence. Not one word must be said of the tribulation and anguish denounced against sinners in general: much less of the unquenchable fire, which, if God be true, awaits several of those particular offences that have fallen within their own notice. These tender parts are not to be touched without danger, by them who study to recommend themselves to men: or if they are, it must be with the utmost caution, and a nice evasion in reserve. But they may safely thunder against those who are out of their reach, and against those sins which they suppose none that hear them are guilty of. No one takes it to heart, to hear those practises laid open which he is not concerned in himself. But when the stroke comes home, when it reaches his own case, then is he, if not convinced, displeased, or angry and out of patience.

These are the methods of those corrupters of the Word, who act in the sight of men, not of God. He trieth the hearts, and will receive no service, in which the lips only are concerned. But their words have no intercourse with their thoughts Nor is it proper for them that they should. For if their real intention once appeared, it must make itself unsuccessful. They purpose, it is true, to do good by the Gospel of Christ, but it is to themselves, not to others. Whereas they that use sincerity in preaching the Gospel; in the good of others, seek their own. And that they are sincere and speak as commissioned officers, in the sight of him whose commission they bear, plainly appears from the direct contrariety between their practice, and that of the dissemblers above described.

First. Consider, it is not their own word they preach, but the Word of him that sent them. They preach it genuine and unmixed. As they do not only profess, but really believe, that, "If any man add unto the Word of God, he will add unto him all the plagues that are written in it;" they are fearful of doing it in the least instance. You have the Gospel from them, if in a less elegant manner, yet fair and as it is: without any mixture of errors to pollute it, or misinterpretation to perplex it: explained in the most natural, obvious manner, by what precedes and what follows the place in question; and commented upon by the most sure way, the least liable to mistake or corruption, the producing of those parallel places that express the same thing the more plainly.

In the next place, they are as cautious of taking from, as of adding to the Word they preach. They dare no more, considering in whose sight they stand, say less than more, than he hath assigned them. They must publish, as proper occasions offer, all that is contained in the Oracles of God, whether smooth or otherwise, it matters nothing since it is unquestionably true, and useful too: "For all Scripture is given by the inspiration of God, and is profitable either for doctrine, reproof, correction, or instruction in righteousness." Either to teach us what we are to believe or practise, or, for conviction of error, or reformation of vice! They know that there is nothing superfluous in it, relating either to faith or practise; and, therefore, they preach all parts of it, though those more particularly, which are more immediately wanted where they are. They are far from abstaining from speaking against any vice, because it is fashionable, and in repute in the place Providence has allotted them; but for that very reason they are more zealous in testifying against it. They are so far from abstaining from speaking for any virtue because it is unfashionable and in disrepute where they are placed, that they therefore the more vigorously recommend it.

Lastly, they who speak in sincerity, and as in the sight

of him who deputes them, shew that they do so, by the manner in which they speak. They speak with plainness and boldness, and are not concerned to palliate their doctrine, to reconcile it to the taste of men. They endeavour to set it always in a true light, whether it be a pleasing one or not. They will not, they dare not, soften a threatening, so as to prejudice its strength, neither represent sin in such mild colours, as to impair its native blackness. Not that they do not choose mildness, when it is likely to be effectual. Though they know the terrors of the Lord, they desire rather to persuade men. This method they use, and love to use it, with such as are capable of persuasion: with such as are not, they are obliged, if they will be faithful, to take the severer course: let the revilers look to that: it harms not them: let the hearers accommodate themselves to the word: the word is not in this sense to be accommodated to the hearers. The preacher of it would be less in fault, in a slavish obsequiousness on one side, than in an unrelenting sternness on the other.

If then we have spoken the Word of God, the genuine unmixed Word of God, and that only. If we have put no unnatural interpretation upon it, but taken the known phrases in their common obvious sense; and when they were less known, explained Scripture by Scripture. If we have spoken the whole Word, as occasion offered, though rather the parts which seemed most proper to give a check to some fashionable vice, or to encourage the practice of some unfashionable virtue: and if we have done this plainly and boldly, though with all the mildness and gentleness that the nature of the subject will bear; then, believe ye our works, if not our words, or rather, believe them both together. Here is all a preacher can do; all the evidence that he either can or need give of his good intentions. There is no way but this to show that he speaks as of sincerity, as commissioned by the Lord, and as in his sight. If there be any who after all this, will not believe, that it is his concern not our own, we labour for: that our first intention in speaking, is to point him the way to happiness, and to disen-

gage him from the great road that leads to misery; we are clear of the blood of that man, it rests on his own head. For thus saith the Lord, who hath set us as watchmen over the souls of our countrymen and brethren, "If they warn the wicked of his way to turn from it;"—much more if we use all methods possible to convince him that the warning is of God: "If he do not turn from his way," which certainly he will not, if he do not believe that we are in earnest,—"he shall die in his iniquity, but thou hast delivered thine own soul."

SERMON CXXXI.

ON THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD.

WRITTEN IN THE YEAR 1732.

1 CORINTHIANS XV. 35.

"But some Man will say, How are the Dead raised up? and with what Body do they come?"

THE Apostle having, in the beginning of this chapter, firmly settled the truth of our Saviour's Resurrection, adds, "Now, if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you, that there is no resurrection of the dead?" It cannot now any longer seem impossible to you that God should raise the dead, since you have so plain an example of it in our Lord, who was dead and is alive, and the same power which raised Christ, must also be able to quicken our mortal bodies.

"But some man will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?" How can these things be? How is it possible that these bodies should be raised again, and joined to their several souls, which many thousands of years ago were either buried in the earth, or swallowed up in the sea, or devoured by fire?—which have mouldered into the finest dust,—that dust scattered over the face of the earth, dispersed as far as the heavens are wide;—nay, which has undergone ten thousand changes, has fattened the earth, become the food of other creatures, and these again the food of other men? How is it possible

that all these little parts, which made up the body of Abraham, should be again ranged together, and unmixed with the dust of other bodies, be all placed in the same order and posture that they were before, so as to make up the very self-same body, which his soul at his death forsook? Ezekiel was indeed in a vision, set down in a valley full of dry bones, "and he heard a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone; the sinews and the flesh came upon them, and the skin covered them above, and breath came into them, and they lived, and stood upon their feet." This might be in a vision. But that all this, and much more, should in time come to pass; that our bones after they are crumbled into dust, should really become living men;—that all the little parts whereof our bodies were made, should immediately, at a general summons, meet again, and every one challenge and possess its own place, till at last the whole be perfectly rebuilt;—that this, I say, should be done,—is so incredible a thing, that we cannot so much as have any notion of it. And we may observe, that the Gentiles were most displeased with this article of the Christian faith: it was one of the last things the Heathens believed; and it is to this day the chief objection to Christianity, "How are the dead raised up? With what body do they come?" In my discourse on these words, I shall do three things:

I. I shall show, that the Resurrection of the self-same Body that died and was buried, contains nothing in it incredible, or impossible.

II. I shall describe the difference which our Saviour makes between the qualities of a glorified, and a mortal body.

III. I shall draw some inferences from the whole.

I. I shall show, That the Resurrection of the self-same Body that died, contains nothing in it incredible, or impossible.

But before I do this, it may be proper to mention some of the reasons upon which this article of our faith is built.

And 1. The plain notion of a resurrection, requires that the self-same body that died should rise again. Nothing can be said to be raised again, but that very body that died. If God give to our souls at the last day a new body, this cannot be called the resurrection of our body, because that word plainly implies the fresh production of what was before.

2. There are many places of Scripture that plainly declare it. St. Paul, in the 53d verse of this chapter, tells us, that "this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." Now by this mortal, and this corruptible, can only be meant, that body which we now carry about with us, and shall one day lay down in the dust.

The mention which the Scripture makes of the places where the dead shall rise, further shews, that the same body which died shall rise. Thus we read in Daniel, "Those that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake; some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." And, we may likewise observe, that the very phrase—of *sleep* and *awake*, implies, that when we rise again from the dead, our bodies will be as much the same as they are when we awake from sleep. Thus again our Lord affirms, John v. 28, "The hour is coming in which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good to the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil to the resurrection of damnation." Now if the same body do not rise again, what need is there of opening the graves at the end of the world? The graves can give up no bodies but those which were laid in them. If we were not to rise with the very same bodies that died, then they might rest for ever. To this we need only add that of St. Paul, "The Lord shall change this vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body." Now this vile body, can be no other than that with which we are now clothed, which must be restored to life again.

That in all this, there is nothing incredible or impos-

sible, I shall shew, by proving these three things. 1. That it is possible for God to keep and preserve unmixed, from all other bodies, the particular dust into which our several bodies are dissolved, and can gather and join it again, how far soever dispersed asunder. 2. That God can form that dust so gathered together, into the same body it was before. 3. That when he hath formed this body, he can enliven it with the same soul that before inhabited it.

1. God can distinguish and keep unmixed from all other bodies, the particular dust into which our several bodies are dissolved, and can gather it together and join it again, how far soever dispersed asunder. God is infinite both in knowledge and power. He knoweth the number of the stars, and calleth them all by their names: he can tell the number of the sands on the sea shore: and is it at all incredible, that he should distinctly know the several particles of dust into which the bodies of men are mouldered, and plainly discern to whom they belong, and the various changes they have undergone? Why should it be thought strange, that he, who at the first formed us, whose eyes saw our substance yet being imperfect, from whom we were not hid when we were made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth, should know every part of our bodies, and every particle of dust whereof we were composed? The artist knows every part of the watch which he frames, and if it should fall in pieces, and the various parts of it lie in the greatest disorder and confusion, yet he can soon gather them together, and as easily distinguish one from another as if every one had its particular mark. He knows the use of each, and can readily give it its proper place, and put them all exactly in the same figure and order they were before. And can we think that the Almighty Builder of the World, whose workmanship we are, does not know whereof we are made, or is not acquainted with the several parts of which this earthly tabernacle is composed? All these lay in one vast heap at the creation, till he separated them one from another, and framed them into those distinct bodies, whereof this beau-

tiful world consists. And why may not the same Power collect the ruins of our corrupted bodies, and restore them to their former condition? All the parts into which men's bodies are dissolved, however they seem to us carelessly scattered over the face of the earth, are yet carefully laid up by God's wise disposal till the day of the restoration of all things. They are preserved in the waters and fires, in the birds and beasts, till the last trumpet shall summon them to their former habitation.

But, say they, "It may sometimes happen that several men's bodies may consist of the self same matter. For the bodies of men are often devoured by other animals, which are eaten by other men. Nay, there are nations which feed upon human flesh, consequently they borrow a great part of their bodies from other men. And if that which was part of one man's body, becomes afterwards part of another man's, how can both rise at the last day with the same bodies they had before?" To this it may easily be replied, That a very small part of what is eaten turns to nourishment, the far greater part goes away according to the order of nature. So that it is not at all impossible for God, who watches over and governs all this, so to order things, that what is part of one man's body, though eaten by another, shall never turn to his nourishment, or if it does, that it shall wear off again, and some time before his death be separated from him, so that it may remain in a capacity of being restored at the last day to its former owner.

2. God can form this dust, so gathered together, into the same body it was before. And that it is possible all must own, who believe that God made Adam out of the dust of the earth. Therefore the bodies of men being dust after death, it is no other than it was before; and the same power that at the first made it of dust, may as easily re-make it, when it is turned into dust again. Nay, it is no more wonderful, than the forming a human body in the womb, which is a thing we have daily experience of, and is doubtless as strange an instance of divine power as the resurrection of it can possibly be. And were it not so

common a thing, we should be as hardly brought to think it possible, that such a beautiful fabrick as the body of man is, with nerves and bones, flesh and veins, blood, and the several other parts whereof it consists, should be formed, as we know it is, as now we are, that hereafter it should be rebuilt when it has been crumbled into dust. Had we only heard of the wonderful production of the bodies of men, we should have been as ready to ask, How are men made, and with what bodies are they born? as now, when we hear of the resurrection, How are the dead raised up, and with what bodies do they come?

3. When God hath raised this body, he can enliven it with the same soul that inhabited it before. And this we cannot pretend to say is impossible to be done, for it has been done already. Our Saviour himself was dead, rose again, and appeared alive to his disciples and others, who had lived with him many years, and were then fully convinced, that he was the same person they had seen die upon the cross.

Thus have I shown, that the resurrection of the same body is by no means impossible to God. That what he hath promised he is able also to perform, by that mighty power by which he is able to subdue all things to himself. Though therefore, we cannot exactly tell the manner how it shall be done, yet this ought not in the least to weaken our belief of this important article of our faith. It is enough, that He, to whom all things are possible, hath passed his Word, that he will raise us again. Let those who presume to mock at the glorious hope of all good men, and are constantly raising objections against it, first try their skill upon the various appearances of nature. Let them explain every thing which they see happen in this world, before they talk of the difficulties of explaining the resurrection. Can they tell me how their own bodies were fashioned and curiously wrought? Can they give me a plain account, by what orderly steps this glorious stately structure, which discovers so much workmanship and rare contrivance, was at first created? How was the first drop of blood made,

and how came the heart, and veins, and arteries to receive it? Of what, and by what means, were the nerves and fibres made? What fixed the little springs in their due places, and fitted them for the several uses for which they now serve? How was the brain distinguished from the other parts of the body, and filled with spirits to move and animate the whole? How came the body to be fenced with bones and sinews, to be clothed with skin and flesh, distinguished into various muscles? Let them but answer these few questions about the mechanism of our own bodies, and I will answer all the difficulties concerning the resurrection of them. But if they cannot do this without having recourse to the infinite Power and Wisdom of the First Cause, let them know, that the same power and wisdom can re-animate it, after it is turned into dust. And that there is no reason for our doubting concerning the thing, because there are some circumstances belonging to it which we cannot perfectly comprehend, or give a distinct account of.

II. I now proceed to the second thing I proposed, which was, to describe the difference the Scripture makes between the qualities of a mortal, and of a glorified body.

The change which shall be made in our bodies at the resurrection, according to the Scripture account, will consist chiefly in these four things. 1. That our bodies shall be raised immortal and incorruptible. 2. That they shall be raised in glory. 3. That they shall be raised in power. 4. That they shall be raised spiritual bodies.

1. The body that we shall have at the resurrection, shall be immortal and incorruptible. "For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." Now these words, *immortal* and *incorruptible*, not only signify, that we shall die no more; for in that sense the damned are immortal and incorruptible: but that we shall be perfectly free from all the bodily evils which sin brought into the world. That our bodies shall not be subject to sickness, or pain, or any other inconveniences we are daily exposed to. This the Scripture calls "the redemption of our bodies;" the freeing them from all their

maladies. Were we to receive them again, subject to all the frailties and miseries, which we are forced to wrestle with, I much doubt whether a wise man, were he left to his choice, would willingly take his again;—whether h would not choose to let his still lie rotting in the grave, rather than to be again chained to such a cumbersome clod of earth. Such a resurrection would be, as a wise heathen calls it, "A resurrection to another sleep." It would look more like a redemption to death again, than a resurrection to life.

The best thing we can say of this house of earth, is, That it is a ruinous building, and will not be long before it tumbles into dust;—that it is not our home;—we look for another house, eternal, in the heavens. That we shall not always be confined here, but that in a little time we shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, from this burthen of flesh, into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. What frail things these bodies of ours are! How soon are they disordered! To what a troop of diseases, pains, and other infirmities are they constantly subject! And how does the least distemper disturb our minds, and make life itself a burthen! Of how many parts do our bodies consist! And if one of these be disordered, the whole man suffers. If but one of these slender threads whereof our flesh is made up, be stretched beyond its due proportion, or fretted by any sharp humour, or broken, what torment does it create! Nay, when our bodies are at the best, what pains do we take, to answer their necessities, to provide for their sustenance, to preserve them in health, and to keep them tenantable, in some tolerable fitness for our souls use! And what time we can spare from our labour is taken up in rest and refreshing our jaded bodies, and fitting them for work again. How are we forced, even naturally, into the confines of death; even to cease to be;—at least to pass so many hours without any useful or reasonable thoughts, merely to keep them in repair! But our hope and comfort are, that we shall shortly be delivered from this burthen of flesh. When "God

shall wipe away all tears from our eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away." O when shall we arrive at that happy land where no complaints were ever heard, where we shall all enjoy uninterrupted health both of body and mind, and never more be exposed to any of those inconveniences that disturb our present pilgrimage! When we shall have once passed from death unto life, we shall be eased of all the troublesome care of our bodies, which now takes up so much of our time and thoughts. We shall be set free from all those mean and tiresome labours which we must now undergo to support our lives. Yon robes of light with which we shall be clothed at the resurrection of the Just, will not stand in need of those careful provisions which it is so troublesome to us here, either to procure or to be without. But then, as our Lord tells us, "Those who shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, neither marry nor are given in marriage, neither can they die any more, but they are equal to the angels." Their bodies are neither subject to disease, nor want that daily sustenance, which these mortal bodies cannot be without. Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats, but God will destroy both it and them. This is that perfect happiness which all good men shall enjoy in the other world. A mind free from all trouble and guilt, in a body free from all pains and diseases. Thus our mortal bodies shall be raised immortal. They shall not only be always preserved from death, (for so these might be, if God pleased,) but the nature of them shall be wholly changed, so that they shall not retain the same seeds of mortality. They cannot die any more.

2. Our bodies shall be raised in glory. "Then shall the Righteous shine as the Sun in the kingdom of their Father." A resemblance of this we have in the lustre of Moses's face, when he had conversed with God on the Mount. His face shone so bright, that the children of Israel were afraid to come near him, till he threw a veil over it. And that

extraordinary majesty of Stephen's face, seemed to be an earnest of this glory. "All that sat in the council, looking steadfastly on him, saw his face as it had been the face of an angel." How then, if it shone so gloriously even on earth, will it shine in the other world, when his, and the bodies of all the saints, are made like unto Christ's glorious body! How glorious the body of Christ is, we may guess from his transfiguration. St. Peter, when he saw this, when our Lord's face shone as the sun, and his raiment became shining and white as snow, was so transported with joy and admiration, that he knew not what he said. When our Saviour discovered but a little of that glory which he now possesses, and which in due time he will impart to his followers, yet that little of it made the place seem a Paradise; and the disciples thought, that they could wish for nothing better than always to live in such pure light, and enjoy so beautiful a sight. "It is good for us to be here; let us make three tabernacles." Here let us fix our abode for ever. And if they thought it so happy only to be present with such heavenly bodies, and to behold them with their eyes, how much happier must it be to dwell in such glorious mansions, and to be themselves clothed with so much brightness!

This excellency of our heavenly bodies, will probably arise in great measure from the happiness of our souls. The unspeakable joy that we then shall feel, will break through our bodies, and shine forth in our countenances. As the joy of the soul, even in this life, has some influence upon the countenance, by rendering it more open and cheerful: so Solomon tells us, "A man's wisdom makes his face to shine." Virtue, as it refines a man's heart, so it makes his very looks more cheerful and lively.

3. Our bodies shall be raised in Power. This expresses the sprightliness of our heavenly bodies, the nimbleness of their motion, by which they shall be obedient and able instruments of the soul. In this state our bodies are no better than clogs and fetters, which confine and restrain the freedom of the soul. The corruptible body presses down

soul, and the earthly tabernacle weighs down the mind. Our dull, sluggish, inactive bodies, are often unable, or backward to obey the commands of the soul. But in the other life, "they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings as eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint." Or as another expresses it, "they shall run to and fro, like sparks among the stubble." The speed of their motion shall be like that of devouring fire in stubble, and the height of it above the towering of an eagle; for they shall meet the Lord in the air, when he comes to Judgment, and mount up with him into the highest heaven. This earthly body is slow and heavy in all its motions, listless and soon tired with action. But our heavenly bodies shall be as fire; as active and as nimble as our thoughts are.

4. Our bodies shall be raised spiritual bodies. Our spirits are now forced to serve our bodies, and to attend their leisure, and do greatly depend upon them for most of their actions. But our bodies shall then wholly serve our spirits, and minister to them, and depend upon them. So that, as by a natural body, we understand, one fitted for this lower sensible world, for this earthly state; so a spiritual body is one that is suited to a spiritual state, to an invisible world, to the life of angels. And, indeed, this is the principal difference between a mortal and a glorified body. This flesh is the most dangerous enemy we have; we therefore defy and renounce it in our baptism. It constantly tempts us to evil. Every sense is a snare to us. All its lusts and appetites are inordinate. It is ungovernable, and often rebels against reason. The Law in our members wars against the Law of our mind. When the spirit is willing, the flesh is weak; so that the best of men are forced to keep it under, and use it hardly, lest it should betray them into folly and misery. And how does it hinder us in all our devotions! How soon does it jade our minds when employed on holy things! How easily, by its inchanting pleasures, does it divert them from those noble exercises! But when we have obtained the resurrection

unto life, our bodies will be spiritualized, purified, and refined from their earthly grossness; then they will be fit instruments for the soul in all its divine and heavenly employment; we shall not be weary of singing praises to God through infinite ages.

Thus after what little we have been able to conceive of it, it sufficiently appears, that a glorified body is infinitely more excellent and desirable than this vile body. The only thing that remains is,

III. To draw some inferences from the whole. And 1st, From what has been said, we may learn the best way of preparing ourselves to live in those heavenly bodies, which is by cleansing ourselves more and more from all earthly affections, and weaning ourselves from this body and all the pleasures that are peculiar to it. We should begin in this life, to loosen the knot between our souls and this mortal flesh. To refine our affections, and raise them from things below to things above. To take off our thoughts, and disengage them from present and sensible things, and accustom ourselves to think of and converse with things future and invisible; that so our souls, when they leave this earthly body, may be prepared for a spiritual one, as having beforehand tasted spiritual delights, and being in some degree acquainted with the things which we then shall meet with. A soul wholly taken up with this earthly body is not fit for the glorious mansions above. A sensual mind is so wedded to bodily pleasures, that it cannot enjoy itself without them, and it is not able to relish any other, though infinitely to be preferred before them. Nay, such as follow the inclinations of their fleshly appetites, are so far unfit for heavenly joys, that they would esteem it the greatest unhappiness to be clothed with a spiritual body. It would be like clothing a beggar in the robes of a king. Such glorious bodies would be uneasy to them, they would not know what to do in them, they would be glad to retire and put on their rags again. But when we are washed from the guilt of our sins, and cleansed from all filthiness of flesh

and spirit, by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, then we shall long to be dissolved, and to be with our exalted Saviour. We shall be always ready to take wing for the other world, where we shall at last have a body suited to our spiritual appetites.

2. From hence we may see how to account for the different degrees of glory in the heavenly world. For although all the children of God shall have glorious bodies, yet the glory of them all shall not be equal. "As one star differeth from another star in glory, so also is the resurrection of the dead." They shall all shine as stars, but those who by a constant diligence in well-doing, have attained to a higher measure of purity than others, shall shine more bright than others. They shall appear as more glorious stars. It is certain that the most heavenly bodies will be given to the most heavenly souls, so that this is no little encouragement to us to make the greatest progress we possibly can in the knowledge and love of God, since the more we are weaned from the things of the earth now, the more glorious will our bodies be at the resurrection.

3. Let this consideration engage us patiently to bear whatever troubles we may be exercised with in the present life. The time of our eternal redemption draweth nigh. Let us hold out a little longer, and all tears shall be wiped from our eyes, and we shall never sigh nor sorrow any more. And how soon shall we forget all we endured in this earthly tabernacle, when once we are clothed with that house which is from above? We are now but on our journey towards home, and so must expect to struggle with many difficulties; but it will not be long ere we come to our journey's end, and that will make amends for all. We shall then be in a quiet and safe harbour, out of the reach of all storms and dangers. We shall then be at home in our Father's house, no longer exposed to the inconveniences, which so long as we abide abroad in these tents, we are subject to. And let us not forfeit all this happiness, for want of a little more patience. Only let us hold out to

the end, and we shall receive an abundant recompense for all the trouble and uneasiness of our passage, which shall be endless rest and peace.

Let this especially fortify us against the fear of death; it is now disarmed, and can do us no hurt. It divides us indeed from this body awhile, but it is only that we may receive it again more glorious. As God, therefore, said once to Jacob, "Fear not to go down into Egypt, for I will go down with thee, and will surely bring thee up again," so I may say to all who are born of God, Fear not to go down into the grave: lay down your heads in the dust, for God will certainly bring you up again, and that in a much more glorious manner. Only be ye steadfast and unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, and then let death prevail over and pull down this house of clay, since God hath undertaken to rear it up again, infinitely more beautiful, strong, and useful.

SERMON CXXXII.

ON GRIEVING THE HOLY SPIRIT.

WRITTEN IN THE YEAR 1733.

EPHESIANS IV. 30.

"Grieve not the HOLY SPIRIT of GOD, whereby ye are sealed unto the Day of Redemption."

THERE can be no point of greater importance to him who knows, that it is the Holy Spirit which leads us into all truth and into all holiness, than to consider with what temper of soul we are to entertain his Divine Presence, so as not either to drive him from us, or to disappoint him of the gracious ends for which his abode with us is designed, which is not the amusement of our understanding, but the conversion and entire sanctification of our hearts and lives.

These words of the Apostle contain a most serious and affectionate exhortation to this purpose. "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed to the day of redemption."

The title *Holy*, applied to the Spirit of God, does not only denote that he is holy in his own nature, but that he makes us so; that he is the great fountain of holiness to his Church. The Spirit from whence flows all the grace and virtue, by which the stains of guilt are cleansed, and we are renewed in all holy dispositions, and again bear the

image of our Creator. Great reason, therefore, there was for the Apostle to give this solemn charge concerning it, and the highest obligation lies upon us all to consider it with the deepest attention: which that we may the more effectually do, I shall inquire,

I. In what sense the Spirit of God is said to be grieved at the sins of men.

II. By what kind of sin he is more especially grieved.

III. I shall endeavour to shew the force of the Apostle's argument against grieving the Holy Spirit, by whom we are sealed to the day of redemption.

I. I am, first, to inquire, in what sense the Spirit of God may be said to be grieved with the sins of men. There is not any thing of what we properly call passion in God. But there is something of an infinitely higher kind. Some Motions of his Will, which are more strong and vigorous than can be conceived by men, and although they have not the nature of human passions, yet will answer the ends of them. By grief, therefore, we are to understand, a disposition in God's will, flowing at once from his boundless love to the persons of men, and his infinite abhorrence of their sins. And in this restrained sense, it is here applied to the Spirit of God, in the words of the Apostle.

And the reasons for which it is peculiarly applied to him are, 1st. Because he is more immediately present with us. 2d. Because our sins are so many contempts of this highest expression of his love, and disappoint the Holy Spirit in his last remedy. And, 3d. Because by this ungrateful dealing, we provoke him to withdraw from us.

1. We are said to grieve the Holy Spirit by our sins, because of his immediate presence with us. They are more directly committed under his eye, and are, therefore, more highly offensive to him. He is pleased to look upon professing christians, as more peculiarly separated to his honour: nay, we are so closely united to him, that we are said to be "one spirit with him," and, therefore, every sin which we now commit, besides its own proper guilt, carries in it a fresh and infinitely high provocation. "Know ye

not your own selves," saith St. Paul, "that your bodies are the Temples of the Holy Ghost?" And how are they so, but by his inhabitation and intimate presence with our souls. When, therefore, we set up the idols of earthly inclinations in our hearts, (which are properly his altar,) and bow down ourselves to serve those vicious passions, which we ought to sacrifice to his will; this must needs be, in the highest degree, offensive and grievous to him. "For what concord is there between the Holy Spirit and Belial? Or what agreement hath the temple of God with idols?"

2. We grieve the Holy Spirit by our sins, because they are so many contempts of the highest expression of his love, and disappoint him in his last remedy, whereby he is pleased to endeavour our recovery. And thus every sin we now commit is done in despite of all his powerful assistances, in defiance of his reproofs: an ungrateful return for infinite loving-kindness!

As the Holy Spirit is the immediate minister of God's will upon earth, and transacts all the great affairs of the Church of Christ; if while he pours out the riches of his grace upon us, he finds them all unsuccessful, no wonder if he appeals to all the world in the words of the Prophet, against our ingratitude: "And now, O ye men of Judah, judge between me and my vineyard. What could have been done more to my vineyard that I have not done in it? Wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes?" These, and many more such, which we meet with in the Holy Scriptures, are the highest expressions of the deepest concern, such as imply the utmost unwillingness to deal severely even with those, whom yet, by all the wise methods of his grace, he could not reform. The Holy Spirit here represents himself as one who would be glad to spare sinners if he could; and therefore we may be sure it is grievous to him that by their sins they will not suffer him.

For men thus to disappoint the Holy Spirit of Love, for that too is his peculiar title, to make him thus wait that he may be gracious, and pay attendance on us through our

whole course of folly and vanity, and to stand by, and be a witness of our stubbornness, with the importunate offers of infinite kindness in his hands, is a practice of such a nature, that no gracious mind can bear the thoughts of it. It is an argument of God's unbounded mercy, that he is pleased to express, that he is only grieved at it: that his indignation does not flame out against those who are thus basely ungrateful, and consume them in a moment.

It was such ingratitude as this in the Jews, after numberless experiences of his extraordinary mercies towards them, that made Infinite Love, at last, turn in bitterness, to reward them according to their doings, as we find the account given by the Prophets in the most affecting and lively manner. And surely, considering the much greater obligations he hath laid on us, who enjoy the highest privileges, we may be sure that our sinful and untoward behaviour, will, at last, be as great as the mercies we have abused.

There is no doubt but God observes all the sons of men, and his wrath abides on every worker of iniquity. But it is the unfaithful professor, who has known his pardoning love, that grieves his Holy Spirit; which implies a peculiar baseness in our sins. A man may be provoked, indeed, by the wrongs of his enemy, but he is properly grieved by the offences of his friend. And, therefore, besides our other obligations, our very near relation to God, as being his friends, and children, would, if we had a spark of gratitude in our souls, be a powerful restraint upon us, in preserving us from evil.

3. But if arguments of this kind are not strong enough to keep us from grieving our best Friend, the Holy Spirit of God, let us consider, That by this ungrateful conduct, we shall provoke him to withdraw from us.

The truth of this, almost all who have ever tasted of the good gifts of the Holy Spirit, must have experienced. It is to be hoped that we have had, some time or other, so lively a sense of his holy influence upon us, as that when we have been so unhappy as to offend him, we could easily

perceive the change in our souls, in that darkness, distress, and despondency, which more especially follows the commission of wilful and presumptuous sins. At those seasons the blessed Spirit retired and concealed his presence from us: we were justly left to a sense of our own wretchedness and misery, till we humbled ourselves before the Lord, and, by deep repentance and active faith, obtained a return of divine mercy and peace.

And the more frequently we offend him, the more we weaken his influences in our souls. For frequent breaches will necessarily occasion estrangement between us; and it is impossible that our intercourse with him can be cordial, when it is disturbed by repeated interruptions. So a man will forgive his friend a great many imprudences, and some wilful transgressions; but to find him frequently affronting him, all his kindness will wear off by degrees; and the warmth of his affection, even towards him who had once the greatest share of it, will die away; as he cannot but think that such a one does not any longer either desire or deserve to maintain a friendship with him.

II. I come now to consider by what kinds of sin the Holy Spirit is more especially grieved. These sins are, in general, such as either at first wholly disappoint his grace of its due effect upon our souls, or are afterwards directly contrary to his gracious and merciful assistances. Of the former sort I shall only mention, at present, Inconsiderateness; of the latter, Sins of Presumption.

The first I shall mention, as being more especially grievous to the Holy Spirit, is Inconsiderateness and Inadvertence to his holy motions within us. There is a particular frame and temper of soul, a sobriety of mind, without which the Spirit of God will not concur in the purifying of our hearts. It is in our power, through his preventing and assisting grace, to prepare this in ourselves, and he expects we should, this being the foundation of all his after works. Now this consists in preserving our minds in a cool and serious disposition, in regulating and calming our affections, and calling in and checking the inordinate

pursuits of our passions after the vanities and pleasures of this world. The doing of which is of such importance, that the very reason why men profit so little under the most powerful means, is, that they do not look enough within themselves: they do not observe and watch the discords and imperfections of their own spirits, nor attend with care to the directions and remedies which the Holy Spirit is always ready to suggest. Men are generally lost in the hurry of life, in the business or pleasures of it, and seem to think that their regeneration, their new nature, will spring and grow up within them, with as little care and thought of their own, as their bodies were conceived, and have attained their full strength and stature. Whereas, there is nothing more certain, than that the Holy Spirit will not purify our nature, unless we carefully attend to his motions, which are lost upon us, while, in the Prophet's language, we "scatter away our time;" while we squander away our thoughts upon unnecessary things, and leave our spiritual improvement, the one thing needful, quite unthought of and neglected.

There are many persons, who, in the main of their lives, are regular in their conversation, and observe the means of improvement, and attend upon the holy sacrament with exactness, who yet, in the intervals of their duties, give too great liberty to their thoughts, affections, and discourse; they seem to adjourn the great business of salvation to the next hour of devotion. If these professors lose so much in their spiritual estate for want of adjusting and balancing their accounts, what then must we think of those who scarce ever bestow a serious thought upon their eternal welfare? Surely, there is not any temper of mind less a friend to the spirit of religion, than a thoughtless and inconsiderate one, that by a natural succession of strong and vain affections, shuts out every thing useful from their souls, till at length they are overtaken by a fatal lethargy; they lose sight of all danger, and become insensible of divine convictions; and in consequence, quite disappoint all the blessed means of restora-

tion. If, therefore, we measure the Holy Spirit's concern at the sins of men by the degrees of his disappointment, we may conclude, that there is no state of mind that grieves him more, unless that of actual wickedness.

Presumptuous sins are, indeed, in the highest manner offensive to the Holy Spirit of God. They are instances of open enmity against him, and have all the guilt of open rebellion. The wilful sinner is not ignorant or surprised, but knowingly fights against God's express commandment, and the lively, full, and present conviction of his own mind and conscience; so that this is the very standard of iniquity. And all other kinds of sins are more or less heinous, as they are nearer or farther off from sins of this dreadful nature; inasmuch as these imply the greatest opposition to God's will, contempt of his mercy, and defiance of his justice. This, if any thing can, doubtless must so grieve him, as to make him wholly withdraw his gracious presence.

III. I come now to shew the force of the Apostle's argument against grieving the Holy Spirit: because—*we are sealed to the Day of Redemption.*

By the day of redemption, may be meant, either the time of our leaving these bodies at death, or, of our taking them again at the general resurrection. Though here it probably means the latter, in which sense the Apostle uses the word in another place, "Waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our bodies:" and to this day of redemption we are sealed by the Holy Spirit these three ways:

1. By receiving his real stamp upon our souls; by being made the partakers of the Divine Nature.

2. By receiving him as a mark of God's Property, as a sign that we belong to Christ. And,

3. As an earnest and assurance to our own spirits, that we have a Title to eternal happiness.

And, First: We are sealed by the Holy Spirit of God, by our receiving his real stamp upon our souls: being made the partakers of the Divine Nature, and meet for the inheritance of the saints in light. This is, indeed, the design of

his dwelling in us, to heal our disordered souls, and to restore that image of his upon our nature, which is so defaced by our original and actual corruptions. And until our spirits are, in some measure, thus renewed, we can have no communion with him. For "if we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth." But by the renewal of our minds in the image of him that created us, we are still more capable of his influences; and by means of a daily intercourse with him, we are more and more transformed into his likeness, till we are satisfied with it.

This likeness to God, this conformity of our will and affections to his will, is, properly speaking, holiness; and to produce this in us, is the proper end and design of all the influences of the Holy Spirit. By means of his presence with us, we receive from him a greater fulness of holy virtues. We take such features of resemblance in our spirits as correspond to his original perfections. And thus we are sealed by him, in the first sense, by way of preparation for our day of redemption.

And since we are so, and our new nature thus grows up under the same power of his hands, what do we, when we grieve him by our sins, but undo and destroy his work; we frustrate his designs by breaking down the fences which he had been trying to raise against the overflowings of corruption; so that, at last, we entirely defeat all his gracious measures for our salvation.

2. We are sealed by the Holy Spirit unto the day of redemption, as a sign of God's property in us, and as a mark that we belong to Christ. And this is, by his appointment, the condition and security of that future happiness, into which he will admit none but those who have received the Spirit of his Son into their hearts. But in whomsoever he finds this mark and character, when he shall come to judge the world, these will he take to himself, and will not suffer the destroyer to hurt them. To this very purpose the Prophet Malachi, speaking of those who feared God, says, "They shall be mine, saith the Lord, in the day

when I make up my jewels;" that is to say, when I set my seal and mark upon them;—" and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him."

Now if the Holy Spirit be the sign, the seal, and the security of our salvation, then, by grieving him by our sins, we break up this seal with our own hands, we cancel our firmest security, and, as much as in us lies, reverse our own title to eternal life.

Besides this, the Holy Spirit within us, is the security of our salvation: he is likewise an earnest of it, and assures our spirits that we have a title to eternal happiness. " The Spirit of God beareth witness with our spirits that we are the children of God." And in order that this inward testimony may be lively and permanent, it is absolutely necessary to attend carefully to the secret operation of the Holy Spirit within us, who, by infusing his holy consolations into our souls, by enlivening our drooping spirits, and giving us a quick relish of his promises, raises bright and joyous sensations in us: and gives a man before hand, a taste of the bliss to which he is going. In this sense, God is said, by the Apostle to the Corinthians, to have " sealed us, and to have given the earnest of his Spirit in our hearts:" and that earnest, not only by way of confirmation of our title to happiness, but as an actual part of that reward at present, the fulness of which we expect hereafter.

SERMON CXXXIII.

ON LOVE.

THE FOLLOWING DISCOURSE WAS PREACHED AT SAVANNAH IN AMERICA, FEB. 20, 1736.

1 CORINTHIANS XIII. 3.

"*Though I bestow all my Goods to feed the Poor, and give my Body to be burned, and have not* LOVE, *it profiteth me nothing.*"

THERE is great reason to fear, that it will hereafter be said of most of you who are here present, That this scripture, as well as all those you have heard before, profited you nothing. Some perhaps are not serious enough to attend to it; some who do attend will not believe it; some who do believe it, will yet think it a hard saying, and so forget it as soon as they can; and of those few who receive it gladly for a time, some, having no root of humility, or self-denial, when persecution ariseth because of the Word, will, rather than suffer for it, fall away. Nay, even of those who attend to it, who believe, remember, yea, and receive it so deeply into their hearts, that it both takes root there, endures the heat of temptation, and begins to bring forth fruit, yet will not *all* bring forth fruit unto perfection.

The cares, or pleasures of the world, and the desire of other things, (perhaps not felt till then,) will grow up with the word and choke it.

Nor am I that speak the Word of God, any more secure from these dangers, than you that hear it. I too have to bewail "an evil heart of unbelief." And whenever God shall suffer persecution to arise; yea, were it only the slight one of reproach, I may be the first that is offended. Or if I be enabled to sustain this, yet should he let loose the cares of the world upon me, or should he cease to guard me against those pleasures that do not lead to him, and the desire of other things, I should surely be overwhelmed, and having preached to others, be myself a cast-away.

Why then do I speak this Word at all? Why? Because a dispensation of the Gospel is committed unto me: and though what I shall do to-morrow, I know not, to-day I will preach the Gospel. And with regard to you, my commission runs thus, "Son of man, I do send thee to them, and thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God;—whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear."

Thus saith the Lord God, "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." (In order to this, "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.") "Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together as the manner of some is."—"In secret, likewise, pray to thy Father who seeth in secret, and pour out thy heart before him."—Make my word a lantern to thy feet, and a light unto thy paths."—"Keep it in thy heart, and in thy mouth, when thou sittest in thy house, when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up."—"Turn unto me with fasting," as well as prayer: and in obedience to thy dying Redeemer, by eating that bread, and drinking that cup, "shew ye forth the Lord's death till he come." By the power thou shalt through these means receive from on high, do all the things which are enjoined in the law; and avoid all those

things which are forbidden therein, knowing, "that if ye offend in one point, ye are guilty of all." "To do good also, and to distribute, forget not:"—"Yea, while you have time, do all the good you can unto all men." Then, "deny thyself, take up thy cross daily;" and, if called thereto, "resist unto blood." And when each of you can say, "All this have I done:" then let him say to himself farther, (words at which not only such as Felix alone, but the holiest soul upon earth might tremble,) "Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not Love, it profiteth me nothing."

It concerns us all, therefore, in the highest degree, to know,

I. The full sense of these words, "Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned."

II. The true meaning of the word Love: And,

III. In what sense it can be said, "That without Love all this profiteth us nothing."

I. As to the First: it must be observed, that the word used by St. Paul, properly signifies, *To divide into small pieces, and then to distribute what has been so divided:* and consequently it implies, not only divesting ourselves at once of all the worldly goods we enjoy, either from a fit of distate to the world, or a sudden start of devotion, but an act of choice, and that choice coolly and steadily executed. It may imply too, that this be done not out of vanity, but in part from a right principle; namely, from a design to perform the command of God, and a desire to obtain his kingdom. It must be farther observed, that the word *give*, signifies actually to deliver a thing according to agreement, and accordingly it implies, like the word preceding, not a hasty, inconsiderate action, but one performed with opened eyes and a determined heart, pursuant to a resolution before taken. The full sense of the words, therefore, is this, which he that hath ears to ear, let him hear: though I should give all the substance of my house to feed the

poor, though I should do so upon mature choice and deliberation: though I should spend my life in dealing it out to them with my own hands, yea, and that from a principle of obedience: though I should suffer from the same view, not only reproach and shame, not only bonds and imprisonment, and all this by my own continued act and deed, not accepting deliverance: but moreover, death itself; yea, death inflicted in a manner the most terrible to nature: yet all this, if I have not Love, ("the love of God, and the love of all mankind shed abroad in my heart by the Holy Ghost given unto me,") it profiteth me nothing.

II. Let us inquire what this Love is: What is the true meaning of the word. We may consider it, either as to its properties or effects. And that we may be under no possibility of mistake, we will not at all regard the judgment of men, but go to our Lord himself for an account of the Nature of Love; and for the Effects of it, to his inspired Apostle.

The Love which our Lord requires in all his followers is, The Love of God and man;—of God, for his own, and of man, for God's sake. Now what is it to love God, but to delight in him, to rejoice in his will, to desire continually to please him, to seek and find our happiness in him, and to thirst day and night for a fuller enjoyment of him?

As to the measure of this love, our Lord hath clearly told us, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart." Not that we are to love, or delight in none but him. For he hath commanded us not only to love our neighbour, that is, all men, as ourselves; to desire and pursue their happiness as sincerely and steadily as our own: but also to love many of his creatures in the strictest sense; to delight in them, to enjoy them: only in such a manner and measure as we know and feel, not to indispose, but to prepare us for the enjoyment of him. Thus then we are called to love God with all our heart.

The effects, or properties of this love, the apostle describes in the chapter before us. And all these being infallible marks, whereby any man may judge of himself, whether

he hath this love or hath it not, they deserve our deepest consideration.

"Love suffereth long," or is long-suffering. If thou love thy neighbour for God's sake, thou wilt bear long with his infirmities. If he want wisdom, thou wilt pity and not despise him. If he be in error, thou wilt mildly endeavour to recover him, without any sharpness or reproach. If he be overtaken in a fault, thou wilt labour to restore him in the spirit of meekness; and if haply that cannot be done soon, thou wilt have patience with him; if God, peradventure, may bring him at length to the knowledge and love of the truth. In all provocations, either from the weakness or malice of men, thou wilt shew thyself a pattern of gentleness and meekness; and be they ever so often repeated, wilt not be overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good. Let no man deceive you with vain words: he who is not thus long-suffering, hath not love.

Again: "Love is kind." Whosoever feels the love of God and man shed abroad in his heart, feels an ardent and uninterrupted thirst after the happiness of all his fellow-creatures. His soul melts away with the very fervent desire, which he hath continually to promote it. And out of the abundance of the heart, his mouth speaketh. In his tongue is the law of kindness. The same is impressed upon all his actions. The flame within is continually working itself a way, and spreading abroad more and more, in every instance of good-will to all with whom he hath to do. So that whether he thinks or speaks, or whatever he does, it all points to the same end. The advancing, by every possible way, the happiness of all his fellow-creatures. Deceive not, therefore, your own souls: he who is not thus kind, hath not love.

Farther: "Love envieth not." This, indeed, is implied, when it is said, "Love is kind." For kindness and envy are inconsistent: they can no more abide together than light and darkness. If we earnestly desire *all* happiness to *all*, we cannot be grieved at the happiness of any. The fulfilling of our desire will be sweet to our soul; so far

shall we be from being pained at it. If we are always doing what good we can to our neighbour, and wishing we could do more, it is impossible that we should repine at any good he receives; indeed, it will be the very joy of our heart. However, then, we may flatter ourselves, or one another, he that envieth, hath not Love.

It follows, "Love vaunteth not itself;" or rather, is not rash, or hasty in judging; for this is indeed, the true meaning of the word. As many as love their neighbour for God's sake, will not easily receive an ill opinion of any to whom they wish all good, spiritual as well as temporal. They cannot condemn him even in their hearts without evidence: nor upon slight evidence neither. Nor, indeed, upon any, without first, if it be possible, having him and his accuser face to face; or, at the least, acquainting him with the accusation, and letting him speak for himself. Every one of you feels, that he cannot but act thus, with regard to one whom he tenderly loves. Why, then, he who does not act thus, hath not love.

I only mention one thing more of the effects or properties of this love. "Love is not puffed up." You cannot wrong one you love. Therefore, if you love God with all your heart, you cannot so wrong him, as to rob him of his glory, by taking to yourself what is due to him only. You will own that all you are, and all you have, is his: that without him you can do nothing: that he is your light and your life, your strength and your all; and that you are nothing, yea, less than nothing before him. And if you love your neighbour as yourself, you will not be able to prefer yourself before him. Nay you will not be able to despise any one any more than to hate him. As the wax melteth before the fire, so doth pride melt away before love. All haughtiness, whether of heart, speech, or behaviour, vanishes away where love prevails. It bringeth down the high looks of him who boasted in his strength, and maketh him as a little child; diffident of himself, willing to hear, glad to learn, easily convinced, easily persuaded. And whosoever is otherwise minded, let him

give up all vain hope: he is puffed up, and so hath not love.

III. It remains to inquire, in what sense it can be said, "That though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor; yea, though I give my body to be burned, and have not love, it profiteth me nothing."

The chief sense of the words is, doubtless, this: that whatsoever we do, and whatsoever we suffer, if we are not renewed in the spirit of our mind, by the love of God shed abroad in our hearts, by the Holy Ghost given unto us, we cannot enter into life eternal. None can enter there, unless in virtue of the covenant which God hath given unto man in the Son of his Love.

But because general truths are less apt to affect us, let us consider one or two particulars, with regard to which all we can do or suffer, if we have not love, profiteth us nothing. And first, all without this profiteth not, so as to make life happy; nor, secondly, so as to make death comfortable.

And, First: without Love, nothing can so profit us as to make our lives happy. By happiness, I mean, not a slight, trifling pleasure, that perhaps begins and ends in the same hour: but such a state of well-being, as contents the soul, and gives it a steady, lasting satisfaction. But that nothing without love can profit us, as to our present happiness, will appear from this single consideration: you cannot want it in any one single instance without pain, and the more you depart from it, the pain is the greater. Are you wanting in long-suffering? Then so far as you fall short of this, you fall short of happiness. The more the opposite tempers, anger, fretfulness, revenge, prevail, the more unhappy you are. You know it; you feel it; nor can the storm be allayed, or peace ever return to your soul, unless meekness, gentleness, patience, or, in one word, love take possession of it. Does any man find in himself ill-will, malice, envy, or any other temper opposite to kindness? Then is misery there: and the stronger the temper, the more miserable he is. If the slothful man may

be said to eat his own flesh, much more the malicious, or envious. His soul is the very type of hell, full of torment as well as wickedness. He hath already the worm that never dieth, and he is hastening to the fire that never can be quenched. Only as yet the great gulf is not fixed between him and heaven. As yet there is a Spirit ready to help his infirmities; who is still willing, if he stretch out his hands to heaven and bewail his ignorance and misery, to purify his heart from vile affections, and to renew it in the love of God, and so lead him by present, up to eternal happiness.

Secondly: Without love, nothing can make death comfortable. By comfortable, I do not mean stupid, or senseless. I would not say, he died comfortably, who died of an apoplexy, or, by the shot of a cannon; any more than he who, having his conscience seared, died as unconcerned as the beasts that perish. Neither do I believe that you would envy any one the comfort of dying raving mad. But by a comfortable death, I mean, a calm passage out of life, full of even, rational peace and joy. And such a death, all the acting, and all the suffering in the world, cannot give, without love.

To make this still more evident, I cannot appeal to your own experience; but I may to what we have seen, and to the experience of others. And two I have myself seen going out of this life in what I call a comfortable manner; though not with equal comfort. One had evidently more comfort than the other, because he had more Love.

I attended the first, during a great part of his last trial, as well as when he yielded up his soul to God. He cried out, "God doth chasten me with strong pain, but I thank him for all; I bless him for all; I love him for all!" When asked, not long before his release, "Are the consolations of God small with you?" He replied aloud, "No, no, no!" Calling all that were near him by their names, he said, "Think of heaven, talk of heaven: all the time is lost when we are not thinking of heaven." Now this was the voice of love. And so far as that prevailed, all was

comfort, peace, and joy. But as his love was not perfect, so neither was his comfort. He had intervals of fretfulness, and therein of misery. Giving by both an incontestable proof, that love can sweeten both life and death. So when that is either absent from, or obscured in the soul, there is no peace or comfort there.

It was in this place, I saw the other good soldier of Jesus Christ grappling with his last enemy death. And it was, indeed, a spectacle worthy to be seen of God, and angels, and men. Some of his last breath was spent in a Psalm of praise, to him who was then giving him the victory; in assurance whereof he began the triumph, even in the heat of the battle. When he was asked, "Hast thou the love of God in thy heart?" He lifted up his eyes and hands, and answered, "Yes, yes;" with all the strength he had left. To one who inquired, if he was afraid of the devil, whom he had just mentioned as making his last attack upon him, he replied, "No, no: my loving Saviour hath conquered every enemy: he is with me; I fear nothing." Soon after, he said, "The way to my loving Saviour is sharp, but it is short." Nor was it long before he fell into a sort of slumber, wherein his soul sweetly returned to God that gave it.

Here we may observe, was no mixture of any passion or temper contrary to love: therefore, there was no misery; perfect love casting out whatever might have occasioned torment. And whosoever thou art, that hast the like measure of love, thy last end shall be like his.

SERMON CXXXIV.

ON PUBLIC DIVERSIONS.

AMOS III. 6.

"Shall the Trumpet be blown in the City, and the People not be afraid? Shall there be evil in the City, and the Lord hath not done it?"

IT is well if there are not too many here, who are nearly concerned in these words of the Prophet; the plain sense of which seems to be this: Are there any men in the world so stupid and senseless, so utterly void of common reason, so careless of their own and their neighbours safety or destruction, as when an alarm of approaching judgments is given, to shew no signs of apprehension? To take no care in order to prevent them, but go on as securely as if no alarm had been given? Do not all men know, that whatsoever evil befalls them, it befalls them either by God's permission, or by his appointment? And that he designs every evil of this life to warn men to avoid still greater evils? That he suffers these lighter marks of his displeasure to awaken mankind, so that they may shun his everlasting vengeance, and be timely advised by feeling a part of it, so to change their ways, that his whole displeasure may not arise?

I intend, speaking on this subject, to shew, First, That there is no Evil in any place, but the Hand of the Lord is in it.

Secondly, That every uncommon Evil is the Trumpet of God, blown in that place, so that the people may take warning.

Thirdly, To consider, whether, after God hath blown his trumpet in this place, we have been duly afraid.

I am First to shew, in few words, that there is no evil in any place but the hand of the Lord is therein. No evil, that is, no affliction or calamity, whether of a public or of a private nature, whether it concerns only one, or a few persons, or reaches to many, or to all of that place where it comes. Whatever circumstance occasions loss or pain to any man, or number of men, may in that respect be called an evil; and of such evils the Prophet speaks in these words.

Of such evils, we are to believe, that they never happen but by the knowledge and permission of God. And of every such evil we may say, that the Lord hath done it, either by his own immediate power, by the strength of his own right hand, or by commanding, or else suffering it to be done, by those his servants that do his pleasure. For the Lord is King, be the people never so impatient: Yea, the Great King of all the earth. Whatsoever, therefore, is done in all the earth, (sin only excepted,) he doeth it himself. The Lord God Omnipotent still reigneth, and all things are so subject unto him, that his will must be done, whether we agree to it or not; as in heaven, so also upon earth. Not only his blessed angels, but all things serve him in all places of his dominion: those wicked spirits which rule the darkness of this world, and those men who are like them, he rules by constraint. The senseless and brute parts of the creation, by nature; and those men who are like God by choice. But however it be, with, or without their own choice, they all act in obedience to his will: and particularly so, when in judgment, he still remembers mercy, and permits a smaller evil, that he may prevent a

greater. Then, at least, we are to acknowledge the hand of God in whatsoever instruments he makes use of. It makes little difference, whether he executes his purpose by the powers of heaven or hell, or by the mistakes, carelessness, or malice of men. If a destroying angel marches forth against a town or a country, it is God who impowers him to destroy. If bad men distress one or more of their fellow-creatures, the ungodly are a sword of his. If fire, hail, wind, or storm, be let loose upon the earth, yet they only fulfil his word. So certain it is, that there is no evil in any place which the Lord, in this sense, hath not done.

I am to prove, Secondly, That every uncommon evil is the trumpet of God, blown in that place where it comes, that the people may take warning.

Every private affliction is doubtless the voice of God, whereby he calls upon that person to flee to him for succour. But if any extraordinary affliction occurs, especially when many persons are concerned in it, we may not only say, That in this God speaks to us, but that the God of glory thundereth. This voice of the Lord is in power! This voice of the Lord is full of Majesty! This demands the deepest attention of all to whom it comes. This loudly claims the most serious consideration; not only of those to whom it is peculiarly sent, but of all those who are round about them. This, like a voice from heaven, commands, that all people should be afraid, should tremble at the presence of God! That every one should feel and shew that religious fear, that sacred awe of the Majesty of God, which is both the beginning and perfection of wisdom. That fear which should make them haste to do whatsoever the Lord their God commands them, and careful not to turn aside from it to the right hand or the left.

It is needless to use many words to prove this, after what has been proved already. For if there be no evil in any place which the Lord hath not done, and if he doth not willingly send evil on any place, but only to warn them to avoid greater evils, then it is plain, That wherever any evil is, it is the trumpet of God blown in that place, to the end

that the people may be so afraid, as not to continue in any thing which displeaseth him. Then it is plain, that in every such merciful evil, God speaks to this effect, "O that there were such an heart in this people, that they would fear me, and keep my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and their children after them!"

Thirdly: What signs we have manifested of this wise and grateful fear, I am now to consider more at large.

First, Let us consider how God hath blown his trumpet in this place; and, secondly, whether we have been duly afraid.

Let us consider, first, how God hath blown his trumpet among us in this place. And that it might never be forgotten, it were much to be wished, not only that parents would tell their children, to the intent that their posterity might know it, and the children that are yet unborn: but also, that it were written in our public register, for a standing memorial to all generations: that in the very week, and on the very day, when that diversion which hath had a considerable share in turning the Christian world upside down, was to have been brought in hither also, such a fire broke out, as neither we nor our fathers had seen in this place: a fire, which soon spread itself not over one only, but over several dwelling-houses, which so went forth in the fury of its strength, that it soon prevailed over the weak resistance made against it, and left only so much standing of most of those buildings over which it prevailed, as might serve to quicken our remembrance of it. Let it be told, that those who came prepared for another prospect, were entertained with *that* of devouring flames. A prospect which continued during the whole time of the intended diversion, and which was but too plainly to be seen, together with the fiery pillars of smoke, which increased its horror, from the very place which had been pitched upon for the scene of this diversion.

This is the bare matter of fact. And even from this, let any one in whom is the spirit of a man, judge, whether the trumpet of God hath not sufficiently sounded among us of this place! And doth this trumpet give an uncertain

sound? How would you have God speak more plainly? Do you desire that the Lord should also thunder out of heaven, and give hail-stones and coals of fire? Nay, rather let us say, "It is enough! speak no more, Lord, for thy servants hear! Those to whom thou hast most severely spoken, are afraid, and do seek thee with their whole heart. They resolve not to prolong the time, but even *now*, by thy gracious assistance, to look well if there be any way of wickedness in them, and to turn their feet unto the way everlasting: to renounce every thing that is evil in thy sight; yea, the sin that doth the most easily beset them; and to use their whole diligence for the time to come, to make their calling and election sure. Those to whom thou hast spoken by the misfortune of their neighbours, are likewise afraid at thy tokens, and own that it was thy mere goodness, that they too and their substance were not consumed. They likewise firmly purpose in themselves to make the true use of thy merciful warning; to labour more and more, day by day, to purge themselves from all sin, from every earthly affection, that they may be fit to stand in the presence of that God, who is himself *a consuming fire!*"

But have we indeed been thus duly afraid? This is now to be considered. And because we cannot see the hearts of others, let us form our judgment from their actions, which will be best done by a plain relation, of which every one that hears it, can easily tell whether it be true or false.

In the day following that, on which the voice of God had so dreadfully commanded us to exchange our mirth for sadness, the diversion which that had broken off, was as eagerly begun anew: crowds of people flocked out of that very town, where the destruction had been wrought the day before; and rushed by the place of desolation, to the place of entertainment! Here you might see the ground covered with heaps of ruins, mingled with yet unquenched fire. A little way off, as thickly covered with horses and men, pressing on to see another new sight. On this side were the mourners bewailing the loss of their goods, and the necessities of their families. On the other, the feasters

delighting themselves with the sport they had gained. Surely, such a mixture of mirth and sadness, of feasting and mourning, of laughing and weeping, hath not been seen from the day in which our forefathers first came up into this land, until yesterday.

Such is the fear we have shewn of the wrath of God! Thus have we been afraid after he had blown his trumpet among us! These are the signs we have given of our resolution to avoid whatever is displeasing in his sight! Hereby we have proved how we design to avoid that diversion in particular, which he hath given us so terrible a reason to believe is far from being pleasing to him! Not that this is the only reason we have to believe so. Besides this last melancholy argument against it, we have so many others, as any serious Christian would find it a hard task to answer. But I have only time to mention slightly a few of the consequences that were never yet separated from it.

Before I mention these, it is not necessary for me to say, whether the diversion is sinful in itself, simply considered, or not. If any one can find a race which has none of those consequences, let him go to it in the name of God. Only till he finds one which does not give occasion to these or the like villanies, let him who nameth the name of Christ, have a care of any way encouraging them.

One thing more I would have observed, That it is so far from being uncharitable to warn well-meaning people of the tendency of these diversions, that the more clearly and strongly any one represents it to them, the more charitable to them he is. This may be made plain by a very easy comparison. You see the wine when it sparkles in the cup, and are going to drink of it, I tell you, There is poison in it! and, therefore, beg you to throw it away. You answer, The wine is harmless in itself: I reply, perhaps it is so: but still, if it be mixed with what is not harmless, no one in his senses, if he knows it, at least, unless he could separate the good from the bad, will once think of drinking it. If you add, "It is not poison to me, though it be to others. Then I say, Throw it away for thy brother's sake, lest thou

embolden him to drink also. Why should thy strength occasion thy weak brother to perish for whom Christ died? Now let any one judge which is the uncharitable person; he who pleads against the wine or the diversion, for his brother's sake, or he who pleads against the life of his brother, for the sake of the wine or the diversions.

All the doubt there can be is this: Is there poison in this diversion which is supposed to be harmless in itself. To clear this up, let us, first, observe, The notorious lying that is always joined with it; the various kinds of over-reaching and cheating! the horrid oaths and curses that constantly accompany it, wherewith the name of our Lord God, blessed for ever, is blasphemed. When or where was this diversion ever known without these dreadful consequences? Who was ever one day present at one of these entertainments, without being himself a witness to some of these? And surely these alone, had we no other ill consequences to charge upon this diversion, are enow, till a way is found to purge it from them, to make both God and all wise men to abhor it.

But over and above these, we charge it, secondly, with affording the fairest means to exercise and to increase covetousness. This is done by the occasion it gives to all, who please to lay wagers with one another: which commonly brings so strong a desire of possessing what is another's, as will hardly cease when that one point is decided; but will be exceeding likely to leave such a thirst in the mind, as not all the winning in the world will satisfy. And what amends can the trifling sport of a thousand people make, for one soul thus corrupted and ruined? Therefore, on this account too, till a way is known to secure all that frequent it from this danger, well may this sport itself be an abomination to him who values one soul more than the whole world.

May we not well fear, that it is an abomination to the Lord, because of a third effect of it? Because it is so apt to enflame those passions which he so earnestly commands us to quench? Because many people are so heated on such occasions, as they never ought to be on any occasion.

Supposing it possible that a man might be angry and not sin; yet hardly upon such occasions, or in such a degree as those who are angry on such occasions commonly are. This consequence too, let him separate from such a diversion, who would prevent its being displeasing to God.

Till this be done, let no one say, What harm is there in a horse-race? But if any should still ask that question, we can answer yet more particularly, Are you a young person who desire to go to it? Then it is likely you go either to see or to be seen; to admire other fine sights, or to be admired yourself. The hurt of this is, it nourishes that friendship which is enmity with God. It strengthens those affections which are already too strong, the desire of the eye, and the pride of life. All such diversions as these are the noblest instruments the devil has, to fill the mind with earthly, sensual, and devilish passions; to make you of a light and trifling spirit: in a word, to make you a lover of pleasure more than a lover of God. Are you, who desire to go to it, advanced in years, and, therefore, less subject to such temptations? Take heed that your hearts deceive you not. But be it as you suppose, hath it not done you hurt enough, if it has hindered any of you from partaking of the blessed sacrament? If by preventing either that serious examination, or that private devotion which you wisely use before you come to it, it has occasioned your neglecting to come to this holy table; and so not only disobeying a plain command of God, but likewise losing all those inestimable advantages which are there reached out to them who obey him. Are you a rich man that desire to go? Then you have probably given something towards it. That is, you have thrown away that seed, which might have borne fruit to eternity! You have thrown away a part of that talent, which, had you rightly improved, you might have been an everlasting gainer by it! You have utterly lost what God himself, had you lent it to him, would richly have repaid you; for you have given to those who neither need, nor perhaps thank you for it; which, if you had bestowed upon your helpless brethren, your blessed Redeemer would have

esteemed it as done unto himself, and would have treated you accordingly at the great day. Are you a poor man who have gone, or given any thing to this diversion? Then it has done you most hurt of all. It has made you throw away for an idle sport abroad, what your wife and family wanted at home. If so, you have denied the faith, and are far worse than an infidel. But suppose it cost you no money, was it not hurt enough, if it cost you any of your time? What had you to do to run after trifling diversions, when you ought to have been employed in honest labour? Surely if the rich think, that God hath given them more than they want, (though it will be well if they do not one day think otherwise;) yet *you* have no temptation to think so. Sufficient for your day is the labour thereof.

I have but a few words to add,—and those I speak not to them who are unwilling to hear, whose affections are set upon this world, and therefore their eyes are blinded by it. But I speak to them in whom is an understanding heart, and a discerning spirit:—who, if they have formerly erred, are now resolved, by the grace of God, to return no more to the error of their ways; but for the time to come, not only to avoid, but also earnestly to oppose whatsoever is contrary to the will of God. To these I say, Are you young? So much the rather scorn all employments that are useless, but much more, if they are sinful. For you are they, whose wisdom and glory it is "to remember your Creator in the days of your youth." Are you elder? So much the rather bestow all the time which you can spare from the necessary business of this life, in preparing yourself and those about you, for their entrance into a better life. For your day is far spent, and your night is at hand. Redeem, therefore, the little time you have left. Are you rich? Then you have particular reason to labour that you may be rich in good works. For you are they to whom much is given, not to throw away, but to use well and wisely; and of you much shall be required. Are you poor? Then you have particular reason to work with your hands, that you may provide for your own household. Nor when

you have done this, have you done all. For then you are to labour that you may give to him that needeth. Not to him that needeth diversions, but to him that needeth the necessaries of nature, that needeth clothes to cover him, food to support his life, or a house where to lay his head.

What remains, but that we labour, one and all, young and old, rich and poor, to wipe off the past scandal from our town and people. First, by opposing to the utmost, for the time to come, by word and deed, among our friends, and all we have to do with, this unhappy diversion, which has such terribly hurtful consequences. By doing all we possibly can to hinder its coming among us any more. And, Secondly, by shewing all the mercy we can to our afflicted neighbours, according as God hath prospered us, and by this timely relief of them, laying up for ourselves a good foundation against the day of necessity. Thirdly, By our constant attendance on God's public service, and blessed sacrament, and our watchful, charitable, and pious life. Thus giving the noblest proof before men and angels, that although even after we were troubled, we went wrong, yet upon more deeply considering, how God hath blown his trumpet among us, we were afraid. We then shall say, with an awakened heart, Behold, the Lord our God hath shewed us his glory and his greatness, and we have heard his voice out of the midst of the fire. Now, therefore, while time is, let us put away far from us every accursed thing; "For if we hear this voice of the Lord our God any more, then we shall die."

*** Every experienced Christian will readily observe, that Mr. Wesley wrote the preceding Sermon before he was fully acquainted with the power of Divine Grace. Nevertheless, it evidently discovers a mind under the influence of the fear of God, and a sincere desire to know and please him. The arguments he makes use of to prove the *sinfulness* of attending public diversions, are striking and unanswerable, and demand our most serious regard. We stand upon the brink of eternity! There is only a step between

us and the unfathomable gulf! Are not sensual diversions and amusements solely calculated to divert our thoughts from God, and the things of grace and glory? Is it possible then for any one of us to be present at those scenes of riot and dissipation, with a single eye, with a pure intention to please God? Previous to our entrance into the field of folly, can we retire in secret, and kneel down at the feet of the Almighty, and intreat his blessing upon the premeditated madness that we design, not only as a spectator of, but a party concerned and interested in the success of it? Would not our presence in such deplorable scenes, harden and darken the minds of those who noticed us? Is it possible to retire from the race ground, or any other place devoted to folly, without a guilty conscience? And could we then deceive ourselves with the imagination, that we had been giving all diligence to be found of Christ, in peace without spot and blameless?

SERMON CXXXV.

ON THE HOLY SPIRIT.

The following Sermon was preached at St. Mary's, Oxford, on Whit-Sunday, 1736, and was found among the Papers of the late Mr. Wesley.

2 COR. III. 17.

"*Now the* LORD *is that Spirit.*"

THE Apostle had been shewing, how the gospel ministry was superior to that of the law: the time being now come when types and shadows should be laid aside, and we should be invited to our duty by the manly and ingenuous motives of a clear and full Revelation, open and free on God's part, and not at all disguised by his ambassadors. But what he chiefly insists upon, is not the *manner*, but the *subject* of their ministry: "Who hath made us able ministers," saith he, "of the New Testament: not of the letter, but of the Spirit; for the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life." Here lies the great difference between the two dispensations: that the law was, indeed, *spiritual* in its demands, requiring a life consecrated to God in the observance of many rules, but not conveying spiritual assistance, its effect was only to kill and mortify man; by giving him to understand, that he must needs be in a state of great depravity, since he found it so difficult to obey

God; and that, as particular deaths were by that institution inflicted for particular sins, so death, in general, was but the consequence of his universal sinfulness. But the ministration of the New Testament was that of a "Spirit which giveth life:" a Spirit not only promised, but actually conferred: which should both enable Christians now to live unto God, and fulfil precepts even more spiritual than the former, and restore them hereafter to perfect life, after the ruins of sin and death. The incarnation, preaching, and death of Jesus Christ, were designed to represent, proclaim, and purchase for us this gift of the Spirit: and, therefore, says the Apostle, "The Lord is that Spirit, or *the* Spirit."

This description of Christ was a proper inducement to Jews to believe on him; and it is still a necessary instruction to Christians, to regulate their expectations from him. But I think this age has made it particularly necessary to be well assured, *What Christ is to us?* When that question is so differently resolved by the pious but weak accounts of some pretenders to *faith* on one hand; and by the clearer but not perfectly Christian accounts of some pretenders to *reason* on the other. While some derive from him a *righteousness of God*, but in a sense somewhat improper and figurative; and others no more than a charter of pardon and a system of morality: while some so interpret the gospel, as to place the holiness they are to be saved by, in something divine, but exterior to themselves; and others, so as to place it in things really within themselves, but not more than human. Now the proper cure of what indistinctness there is one way, and what infidelity in the other, seems to be contained in the doctrine of my text, "The Lord is that Spirit."

In treating of which words, I will consider,

I. The Nature of our *fall* in Adam; by which it will appear, that if *the Lord* were not *that Spirit*, he could not be said to save or redeem us from our fallen condition.

II. I will consider the *Person* of Jesus Christ; by which it will appear, that *the Lord is that Spirit*. And,

III. I will inquire into the Nature and Operations of the *Holy Spirit*, as bestowed upon Christians.

I. I am to consider the Nature of our fall in Adam.

Our first parents did enjoy the presence of the Holy Spirit! for they were created in the *image* and *likeness* of God, which was no other than his Spirit. By that he communicates himself to his creatures, and by that alone they can bear any likeness to him. It is, indeed, *his life* in them; and is so properly *divine*, that upon this ground, angels and regenerate men are called his *children*.

But when man would not be guided by the Holy Spirit, it left him. When he would be wise in his own way, and in his own strength, and did not depend in simplicity upon his heavenly Father, the seed of a superior life was recalled from him. For he was no longer fit to be formed into a heavenly condition, when he had so unworthy a longing for, or rather dependance upon an earthly fruit, which he knew God would not bless to him; no longer fit to receive supernatural succours, when he could not be content with his happy state towards God, without an over-curious examination into it.

Then he found himself forsaken of God, and left to the poverty, weakness, and misery, of his own proper nature. He was now *a mere animal*, like unto other creatures made of flesh and blood, but only possessed of a larger understanding: by means of which he should either be led into greater absurdities than they could be guilty of, or else be made sensible of his lost happiness, and put into the right course for regaining it. That is, if he continued a careless apostate, he should love and admire the goods of this world, the adequate happiness only of animals; and, to recommend them and dissemble their defects, add all the ornament to them that his superior wit could invent. Or else, (which is indeed more above brutes, but no nearer the perfection of man as a partaker of God, than the other,) he should frame a new world to himself in theory; sometimes by warm imaginations, and sometimes by cool reasonings, endeavour to aggrandize his condition and defend his

practice, or at least divert himself from feeling his own meanness and disorder.

If, on the other hand, he should be willing to find out the miseries of his fall, his understanding might furnish him with reasons for constant mourning, for despising and denying himself: might point out the sad effects of turning away from God and losing his Spirit, in the shame and anguish of a nature at variance with itself; thirsting after immortality, and yet subject to death; approving righteousness, and yet taking pleasure in things inconsistent with it; feeling an immense want of something to perfect and satisfy all its faculties, and yet neither able to know what that mighty thing is, otherwise than from its present defects, nor how to attain it, otherwise than by going contrary to its present inclinations.

Well might Adam now find himself *naked:* nothing less than God was departed from him. Till then he had experienced nothing but the goodness and sweetness of God: a heavenly life spread itself through his whole frame, as if he were not made of dust; his mind was filled with angelic wisdom, a direction from above took him by the hand; he walked and thought uprightly, and seemed not to be a child or novice in Divine Things. But now he had other things to experience; something in his soul, that he did not find, nor need to fear, while he was carried on straight forward by the gentle gale of divine grace; something in his body, that he could not see nor complain of while that body was covered with glory. He feels there a self-displeasure, turbulence, and confusion, such as is common to other *spirits* who have lost God: he sees here causes of present shame and a future dissolution; and a strong engagement to that groveling life which is common to animals that never enjoyed the divine nature.

The general character, therefore, of man's present state is *death:* a death from God, whereby we no longer enjoy any intercourse with him, or happiness in him: we no longer shine with his glory, or act with his powers. It is true, while we have a being, "*in him* we must live, and

move, and have our being:" but this we do now, not in a *filial* way, but only in a *servile* one, as all, even the meanest creatures, exist in him. It is one thing to receive from God an ability to walk and speak, eat and digest; to be supported by his hand as a part of this earthly creation, and upon the same terms with it, for farther trial or vengeance; and another, to receive from him a life which is his own likeness; to have within us something which is not of this creation, and which is nourished by his own immediate word and power.

Yet this is not the whole that is implied in man's sin. For he is not only inclined himself to all the sottishness of appetite, and all the pride of reason, but he is fallen under the tutorage of the *evil* one, who mightily furthers him in both. The state he was at first placed in, was a state of the most simple subjection to God, and this entitled him to drink of his Spirit: but when he, not content to be actually in Paradise, under as full a light of God's countenance as he was capable of, must know good and evil, and be satisfied upon rational grounds whether it was best for him to be as he was, or not; when disdaining to be directed as a child, he must weigh every thing himself, and seek better evidence than the voice of his Maker and the seal of the Spirit in his heart; then he not only obeyed but became like to that eldest son of pride, and was unhappily entitled to frequent visits, or rather a continued influence from him. As life was annexed to his keeping the command, and accordingly that Spirit, which alone could *form* it unto true life, dwelt in his body: so being sentenced to death for his transgression, he was now delivered unto "him who has the power of death, that is, the devil;" whose hostile and unkindly impressions promote death and sin at once.

This being the state of man, if God should send him a Redeemer, what must that Redeemer do for him? Will it be sufficient for him to be the promulger of a new Law, to give us a set of excellent precepts? No: if we could keep them, that alone would not make us happy. A good con-

science brings a man the happiness of being consistent with himself, but not that of being raised above himself into God; which every person will find, after all, is the thing he wants. Shall he be the fountain of an *imputed* righteousness, and procure the tenderest favour to all his followers? This also is not enough. Though a man should be allowed to be righteous, and be exempt from all punishment, yet if he is as really enslaved to the corruptions of nature, as endued with these privileges of redemption, he can hardly make himself easy; and whatever *favour* he can receive from God, here or hereafter, without a communication of himself, it is neither the cure of a *spirit* fallen, nor the happiness of one reconciled. Must not then our Redeemer be, (according to the character which St. John his forerunner gave of him,) one that "baptizeth with the Holy Ghost;" the Fountain and Restorer of that to mankind, whereby they are restored to their first estate, and the enjoyment of God? And this is a presumptive argument that "The Lord is that Spirit."

II. But it will appear more plainly that he is so, from the second thing proposed: which was the consideration of the Person of Jesus Christ.

He was one to whom "God gave not the Spirit by measure; but in him dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, and of his fulness we have all received, and grace for grace." Indeed all the communications of the Godhead which any creatures could receive, were always from him as the Word of God: but all that mankind, now in an earthly state, were to receive, must be from him by means of that *Body*, at first mortal like unto theirs, and then glorious *in the Likeness of God*, which he took upon him for their sake.

In the beginning, the heavenly Word, being a Spirit that issued from the Father, and the Word of his power, made man an image of immortality, according to the likeness of the Father: but he who had been made in the image of God, afterwards became mortal, when the more powerful Spirit was separated from him. To remedy this, the Word

became Man, that man, by receiving the adoption, might become a Son of God once more: that the light of the Father might rest upon the flesh of our Lord, and come bright from thence unto us: and so man being encompassed with the light of the Godhead, might be carried into immortality. When he was incarnate and became man, he recapitulated in himself all generations of mankind, making himself the centre of our salvation, that what we lost in Adam, even the image and likeness of God, we might receive in Christ Jesus. By the Holy Ghost coming upon Mary, and the power of the Highest overshadowing her, the incarnation of Christ was wrought, and a new birth, whereby man should be born of God, was shewn; that as by our first birth we did inherit death, so by this birth we might inherit life.

This is no other than what St. Paul teaches us: "The first man, Adam, was made a living soul, but the Second Adam was made a quickening Spirit." All that the first man possessed of himself, all that he has transmitted to us, is *a living Soul;* a nature endued with an animal life, and receptive of a spiritual. But the Second Adam is, and was made to us, *a quickening Spirit;* by a strength from him as our Creator, we were at first raised above ourselves; by a strength from him as our Redeemer, we shall again live unto God.

In him is laid up for us that *supplement* to our nature, which we shall find the need of sooner or later; and that it cannot be countervailed by any assistance from the creatures, or any improvement of our own faculties. For we were made to be happy only in God: and all our labours and hopes, while we do not thirst after our *deified* state, to partake as truly of God as we do of flesh and blood, to be glorified in his nature, as we have been dishonoured in our own; are the labours and hopes of those who utterly mistake themselves.

The Divine Wisdom knew what was our proper consolation, though we did not. What does more obviously present itself in the Saviour of the world, than an *union* of

man with God? An union attended with all the propriety of behaviour that *we* are called to, as candidates of the Spirit; such as walking with God in singleness of heart, perfect self-renunciation, and a life of sufferings. An union which submitted to the necessary stages of *our* progress: where the divine life was hid for the most part in the secret of the soul till death; in the state of separation, comforted the soul, but did not raise it above the intermediate region of Paradise; at the resurrection, clothed the body with heavenly qualities, and the powers of immortality; and, at last raised it to the immediate presence and right hand of the Father.

Christ is not only *God above us*, which may keep us in awe, but cannot save: but he is Immanuel, *God with us* and *in us*. As he is the Son of God, God must be where he is; and as he is the Son of man, he will be with mankind: the consequence of this is, that in the future age "the tabernacle of God will be with men," and he will shew them his glory; and, at present, he will *dwell* in their hearts by faith in his Son.

I hope it sufficiently appears, that "the Lord is that Spirit." Considering what we are, and what we have been, nothing less than the receiving that Spirit again would be redemption to us: and considering who that heavenly Person was, that was sent to be our Redeemer, we can expect nothing less from him.

III. I proceed now to the third thing proposed, viz. To inquire into the Nature and Operations of the Holy Spirit, as bestowed upon Christians.

And here I shall pass by the particular extraordinary gifts, vouchsafed to the first ages, for the edification of the church; and only consider what the Holy Spirit is to every believer, for his personal sanctification and salvation. It is not granted to every one to raise the dead and heal the sick. What is most necessary, is, to be sure, as to ourselves, that we are "passed from death unto life;" to keep our bodies pure and undefiled, and let them reap that health which flows from a magnanimous patience, and the

serene joys of devotion. The Holy Spirit has enabled men to speak with tongues, and to prophesy; but the light that most necessarily attends it, is a light to discern the fallacies of flesh and blood, to reject the irreligious maxims of the world, and to practise those degrees of trust in God, and love to men, whose foundation is not so much in the present appearances of things, as in some that are yet to come. The object which this Light brings us most immediately to know, is ourselves; and by virtue of this, one that is born of God, and has a lively hope, may indeed see far into the ways of Providence, and farther yet into the Holy Scriptures: for the Holy Scriptures, excepting some accidental and less necessary parts, are only a history of that new man which he himself is: and Providence is only a wise disposal of events for the awakening of particular persons, and ripening the world in general for the coming of Christ's kingdom.

But I think the true notion of the Spirit is, that it is some portion of, as well as preparation for, a *life* in God, which we are to enjoy hereafter. The gift of the Holy Spirit looks full to the *Resurrection;* for then is the life of God completed in us.

Then, after man has passed through all the *penalties* of sin, the drudgery and vanity of human life, the painful reflections of an awakened mind, the infirmities and dissolution of the body, and all the sufferings and mortifications a just God shall lay in his way; when, by this mean, he is come to know *God* and *himself*, he may safely be intrusted with true life, with the freedom and ornaments of a child of God; for he will no more arrogate any thing to himself. Then shall the Holy Spirit be fully bestowed, when the flesh shall no longer resist it, but be itself changed into an angelical condition, being *clothed upon* with the incorruption of the Holy Spirit: when the body, which by being born with the soul, and living through it, could only be called an animal one, shall now become spiritual, whilst by the Spirit, it rises into eternity.

Every thing in Christianity is some kind of anticipation

of something that is to be at the end of the world. If the Apostles were to preach by their Master's command, "that the kingdom of God drew nigh:" the meaning was, that from henceforth all men should fix their eyes on that happy time, foretold by the Prophets, when the Messiah should come and restore all things; that by renouncing their worldly conversation, and submitting to the gospel institution, they should fit themselves for, and hasten that blessing. "Now are we the sons of God," as St. John tells us: and yet what he imparts to us at present will hardly justify that title, without taking in that fulness of his Image, which shall then be displayed in us, when we shall be "the children of God, by being the children of the resurrection."

True believers, then, are entered upon a life, the *sequel* of which they know not; for it is "a life hid with Christ in God." He, the fore-runner, hath attained the end of it, being gone unto the Father; but we can know no more of it than appeared in him while he was upon earth. And even that, we shall not know but by following his steps: which if we do, we shall be so strengthened and renewed day by day in the inner man, that we shall desire no comfort from the present world, through a sense of "the joy set before us;" though as to the outward man, we shall be subject to distresses and decays, and treated as the off-scouring of all things.

Well may a man ask his own heart, "Whether it is able to admit the Spirit of God? For where that Divine Guest enters, the laws of another world must be observed. The body must be given up to martyrdom, or spent in the christian warfare, as unconcernedly, as if the soul were already provided of its house from heaven; the goods of this world must be parted with as freely, as if the last fire were to seize them to-morrow; our neighbour must be loved as heartily, as if he were washed from all his sins, and demonstrated to be a child of God by the resurrection from the dead. The fruits of this Spirit must not be mere moral virtues, calculated for the comfort and *decency* of

the present life; but holy dispositions, suitable to the *instincts* of a superior life already begun.

Thus to press forward, whither the promise of life calls him, to turn his back upon the world, and comfort himself in God, every one that has *faith*, perceives to be just and necessary, and forces himself to do it: every one that has *hope*, does it gladly and eagerly, though not without difficulty; but he that has *love*, does it with ease and singleness of heart.

The state of love, being attended with "joy unspeakable and full of glory," with *rest* from the *passions* and vanities of man, with the integrity of an *unchangeable* judgment, and an undivided will, is, in a great measure, its own reward: yet not so as to supersede the desire of another world. For though such a man, having a free and insatiable love of that which is good, may seldom have need formally to propose to himself the hopes of retribution, in order to overcome his unwillingness to his duty: yet surely he must long for that which is best of all; and feel a plain attraction towards that country, in which he has his *place* and station already assigned him; and join in the earnest expectation of all creatures, which wait for the manifestation of the sons of God. For now we obtain but some part of his Spirit, to model and fit us for incorruption, that we may, by degrees, be accustomed to receive and carry God within us; and, therefore, the Apostle calls it, "the earnest of the Spirit;" that is, a part of that honour which is promised us by the Lord. If, therefore, the *earnest* abiding in us, makes us spiritual even now, and that which is mortal is, as it were, swallowed up of immortality; how shall it be, when rising again, we shall see him face to face? When all our members shall break forth into songs of triumph, and glorify him who hath raised them from the dead, and granted them everlasting life? For if this earnest or pledge, embracing man *into itself*, makes him now cry, "Abba, Father;" what shall the whole grace of the Spirit do, when being given at length to believers, it shall

make us like unto God, and perfect us through the Will of the Father?

And thus I have done what was at first proposed: I have considered the Nature of our Fall in Adam; the Person of Jesus Christ; and the Operations of the Holy Spirit in Christians.

The only inference I will draw from what has been said, and principally from the account of man's fall, shall be, The reasonableness of those precepts of *self-denial*, *daily suffering*, and *renouncing the world*, which are so peculiar to christianity, and which are the only foundation whereon the other virtues, recommended in the New Testament, can be practised or attained, in the sense there intended.

This inference is so natural, that I could not help anticipating it in some measure all the while. One would think it should be no hard matter to persuade a creature to abhor the badges of his misery; to dislike a condition or mansion which only banishment and disgrace have assigned him; to trample on the grandeur, refuse the comforts, and suspect the wisdom of a life whose nature it is to *separate* him from his God.

Your Saviour bids you "hate your own life." If you ask the reason, enter into your heart, see whether it be holy, and full of God? or whether, on the other hand, many things that are contrary to him, are wrought there, and it is become a plantation of the enemy? or if this be too nice an inquiry, look upon your body. Do you find there the brightness of an angel, and the vigour of immortality? If not, be sure your soul is in the *same* degree of poverty, nakedness, and absence from God. It is true, your soul may sooner be re-admitted to some rays of the light of God's countenance, than your body can: but if you would take any step at all towards it, to dislike your present self, must be the first.

You want a reason, why you should renounce the world? indeed you cannot *see* the prince of it walking up and down, "seeking whom he may devour;" and you may be so far

ignorant of his devices, as not to know that they take place, as well in the most specious measures of business and learning, as in the wildest pursuits of pleasure. But this, however, you cannot but see, that the world is not still a Paradise of God, guarded and ennobled with the light of glory: it is, indeed, a place, where God has determined he will *not appear* to you, at best, but leave you in a state of hope, that you shall see his face when this world is dissolved.

However, there is a way to rescue ourselves, in great measure, from the ill consequences of our captivity; and our Saviour has taught us that way. It is by *suffering*. We must not only "suffer many things," as he did, and so enter into our glory; but we must also suffer many things, that we may get above our corruption at present, and enjoy the Holy Spirit.

The world has no longer any power over us, than we have a quick relish of its comforts; and suffering abates that. Suffering is, indeed, a direct confutation of the pretences which the flattering tempter gains us by: for I am in human life, and if that life contains such soft ease, ravishing pleasure, glorious eminence, as you promise, why am I thus? Is it because I have not yet purchased riches to make me easy, or the current accomplishments to make me considerable? Then I find that all the comfort you propose, is by leading me off from myself; but I will rather enter deep into my own condition, bad as it is: perhaps I shall be nearer to God, the Eternal Truth, in feeling sorrows and miseries that are personal and real, than in feeling comforts that are not so. I begin already to find, that all my grievances centre in one point; there is always at the bottom one great loss or defect, which is not the want of friends or gold, of health or philosophy. And the abiding sense of this may possibly become a *prayer* in the ears of the Most High: a prayer not resulting from a set of speculative notions, but from the real, undissembled state of all that is within me; nor indeed so explicit a prayer as to describe the thing I want, but considering how strange a want mine is, as explicit a one as I can make.

Since then suffering opens me a door of hope, I will not put it from me as long as I live: it helps me to a true discovery of one period of my existence, though it is a low one; and bids fairer for having some *connexion* with a more glorious period that may follow, than the arts of indulgence, the amusements of pride and sloth, and all the dark policy of this world, which wage war with the whole truth that man must know and feel, before he can look towards God. It may be, while I continue on the cross, I shall, like my Saviour, "put off principalities and powers;" recover myself more and more from the subjection I am indeed in (which he only seemed to be) to those wicked *rulers*, and to "triumph over them in it." At least it shall appear, in the day when God shall visit, that my heart though grown unworthy of his residence, was too big to be comforted by any of his creatures; and was kept for him, as a place originally sacred, though, for the present, unclean.

But supposing that our state does require of us to "die daily," to *sacrifice* all that this present life can boast of, or is delighted with, before we give up life itself; supposing also, that in the hour we do somewhat of this kind, we receive *light* and *strength* from God, to grow superior to our infirmities, and are carried smoothly towards him in the joy of the Holy Ghost: yet how can a man have such frequent opportunities of suffering? Indeed, martyrdoms do not happen in every age, and some days of our lives may pass without reproaches from men: we may be in health, and not want food to eat and raiment to put on, (though health itself and nutrition itself, oblige us to the pain of a constant *correction* of them;) yet still, the love of God and heavenly hope, will not want something to oppress them in this world.

Let a man descend calmly into his heart, and see if there be no root of bitterness springing up; whether at least his thoughts, which are ever in motion, do not sometimes sally out into projects suggested by *pride*, or sink into indolent *trifling*, or be entangled in mean *anxiety*? Does not he

find a motion of *anger*, or of *gaiety*, leavening him in an instant throughout; depriving him of the meekness, and steady *discernment*, he laboured after? Or, let him but conceive at any time, that unfeigned obedience, and watchful zeal, and dignity of behaviour, which is suitable, I do not say to an angel, but to a sinner that has "a good hope through grace," and endeavour to work himself up to it; and if he find no sort of *obstacle* to this within him, he has indeed then no opportunity of suffering. In short, if he is such an abject sort of creature, as will, unless grace should do him a perpetual violence, relapse frequently into a course of thinking and acting entirely *without God;* then he can never want occasions of suffering, but will find his own nature to be the same burden to him, as that "faithless and perverse generation" was to our Saviour, of whom he said, "How long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you?"

I will conclude all with that excellent Collect of our Church:—"O God, who in all ages has taught the hearts of thy faithful people, by sending to them the light of thy Holy Spirit; grant us by the same Spirit to have a right judgment in all things, and evermore to rejoice in his holy comfort, through the merits of Christ Jesus our Saviour, who liveth and reigneth with thee, in the unity of the same Spirit, One GOD, world without end. Amen."

A

PLAIN ACCOUNT

OF

CHRISTIAN PERFECTION;

AS BELIEVED AND TAUGHT BY JOHN WESLEY, A. M. FROM THE YEAR 1725, TO THE YEAR 1777.

1. WHAT I purpose in the following pages is, to give a plain and distinct account of the steps, by which I was led, during a course of many years, to embrace the doctrine of Christian Perfection. This I owe to the serious part of mankind; those who desire to know all the truth as it is in Jesus. And these are only concerned in questions of this kind. To these I would nakedly declare the thing as it is, endeavouring all along to shew, from one period to another, both what I thought, and why I thought so.

2. In the year 1725, being in the 23d year of my age, I met with Bishop Taylor's *Rules and Exercises of Holy Living and Dying*. In reading several parts of this book, I was exceedingly affected: that part in particular, which relates to Purity of Intention. Instantly I resolved to dedicate all my life to God; all my thoughts, and words, and actions; being thoroughly convinced, there was no medium, but that every part of my life, (not some part only,) must either be a sacrifice to God, or to myself; that is, in effect, to the devil.

Can any serious person doubt of this, or find a medium between serving God, and serving the devil?

3. In the year 1729, I met with *Kempis's Christian Pattern.* The nature and extent of inward Religion, the religion of the heart, now appeared to me in a stronger light than ever it had done before. I saw that giving even all my life to God, (supposing it possible to do this, and go no farther,) would profit me nothing, unless I gave my heart; yea, all my heart, to him. I saw, that "Simplicity of intention, and purity of affection," one design in all we speak or do, and one desire ruling all our tempers, are indeed "the wings of the soul," without which she can never ascend the mount of God.

4. A year or two after, Mr. Law's *Christian Perfection, and Serious Call,* were put into my hands. These convinced me more than ever, of the absolute impossibility of being half a Christian. And I determined, through his Grace, (the absolute necessity of which I was deeply sensible of,) to be all-devoted to God, to give him all my soul, my body, and my substance.

Will any considerate man say, that this is carrying matters too far? Or that any thing less is due to him, who has given himself for us, than to give him ourselves; all we have, and all we are?

5. In the year 1729, I began not only to read, but to study the Bible, as the one, the only standard of truth, and the only model of pure religion. Hence I saw, in a clearer and clearer light, the indispensable necessity of having the Mind which was in Christ, and of walking as Christ also walked; even of having, not some part only, but all the Mind which was in him; and of walking as he walked, not only in many or most respects, but in all things. And this was the light, wherein at this time I generally considered religion, as an uniform following of Christ, an entire inward and outward conformity to our Master. Nor was I afraid of any thing more, than of bending this rule to the experience of myself, or of other men; of allowing myself in any the least disconformity to our grand Exemplar.

On January 1, 1733, I preached before the University, in St. Mary's Church, Oxford, on "The circumcision of

the heart;" an account of which I gave in these words, "It is that habitual disposition of soul, which in the sacred Writings is termed holiness, and which directly implies, the being cleansed from sin; from all filthiness both of flesh and spirit, and by consequence, the being endued with those virtues, which were in Christ Jesus; the being so "renewed in the image of our mind," as to be perfect as our Father in heaven is perfect."

In the same sermon I observed, "Love is the fulfilling of the law, the end of the commandment." It is not only the first and great command, but all the commandments in one; "Whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, if there be any virtue, if there be any praise," they are all comprised in this one word, LOVE. In this is perfection, and glory, and happiness. The royal law of heaven and earth is this, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength." The one perfect good shall be your one ultimate end. One thing shall ye desire for its own sake, the fruition of him who is all in all. One happiness shall ye propose to your souls, even an union with him that made them; the having "fellowship with the Father and the Son;" the being "joined to the Lord in one spirit." One design ye are to pursue to the end of time, the enjoyment of God in time, and in eternity. Desire other things so far as they tend to this: Love the creature, as it leads to the Creator. But in every step you take, be this the glorious point that terminates your view. Let every affection and thought, and word, and action, be subordinate to this. Whatever ye desire or fear; whatever ye seek or shun; whatever ye think, speak, or do, be it in order to your happiness in God, the sole End, as well as Source of your Being."

I concluded in these words, "Here is the sum of the perfect law, the circumcision of the heart. Let the spirit return to God that gave it, with the whole train of its affections.—Other sacrifices from us he would not; but the living sacrifice of the heart hath he chosen. Let it be con-

tinually offered up to God, through Christ, in flames of holy love. And let no creature be suffered to share with him: for he is a jealous God. His throne will he not divide with another; he will reign without a rival. Be no design, no desire admitted there, but what has him for its ultimate object. This is the way wherein those children of God once walked, who being dead, still speak to us; "Desire not to live, but to praise his Name; let all your thoughts, words, and works, tend to his glory. Let your soul be filled with so entire a love to him, that you may love nothing but for his sake." "Have a pure intention of heart, a steadfast regard to his glory in all your actions." For then, and not till then, is that mind in us, which was also in Christ Jesus, when in every motion of our heart, in every word of our tongue, in every work of our hands, we pursue nothing but in relation to him, and in subordination to his pleasure; when we too neither think, nor speak, nor act, to fulfil our own will, but the will of him that sent us: When, "whether we eat or drink, or whatever we do, we do it all to the glory of God."

It may be observed, this sermon was composed the first of all my writings, which have been published. This was the view of religion I then had, which even then I scrupled not to term Perfection. This is the view I have of it now, without any material addition or diminution. And what is there here, which any man of understanding, who believes the Bible, can object to? What can he deny, without flatly contradicting the Scripture? What retrench, without taking from the Word of God?

7. In the same sentiment did my Brother and I remain, (with all those young gentlemen in derision termed Methodists,) till we embarked for America, in the latter end of 1735. It was the next year, while I was at Savannah, that I wrote the following lines:

Is there a thing beneath the sun,
That strives with thee my heart to share?
Ah, tear it thence, and reign alone!
The Lord of every motion there!

In the beginning of the year 1738, as I was returning from thence, the cry of my heart was,

O grant that nothing in my soul
May dwell, but thy pure Love alone!
O may thy Love possess me whole,
My joy, my treasure, and my crown!
Strange fires far from my heart remove:
My every act, word, thought, be Love!

I never heard that any one objected to this. And indeed, who can object? Is not this the language not only of every believer, but of every one that is truly awakened? But what have I written, to this day, which is either stronger or plainer?

8. In August following I had a long conversation with Arvin Gradin, in Germany. After he had given me an account of his experience, I desired him to give me in writing a definition of the full Assurance of Faith, which he did in the following words:

"Requies in sanguine Christi: firma fiducia in Deum et persuasio de gratia divina: tranquillita mentis summa, atque serenitas et pax, cum absentia omnis desiderii carnalis, et cessatione peccatorum etiam internorum."

"Repose in the blood of Christ: a firm confidence in God and persuasion of his favour: the highest tranquillity, serenity, and peace of mind, with a deliverance from every fleshly desire, and a cessation of all, even inward sins."

This was the first account I ever heard from any living man, of what I had before learned myself from the Oracles of God, and had been praying for, (with the little company of my friends,) and expecting for several years.

9. In 1739, my Brother and I published a volume of Hymns and Sacred Poems. In many of these we declared our sentiments strongly and explicitly: See page 24.

Turn the full stream of nature's tide:
Let all our actions tend
To thee, their source; thy love the guide,
Thy glory be the end.

Earth then a scale to heaven shall be:
Sense shall point out the road:
The creatures all shall lead to thee,
And all we taste be God.

Again. Lord, arm me with thy Spirit's might,
Since I am call'd by thy great Name:
In thee my wand'ring thoughts unite,
Of all my works be thou the aim;
Thy love attend me all my days,
And my sole business be thy praise. p. 122.

Again. Eager for thee I ask and pant,
So strong the principle divine
Carries me out with sweet constraint,
Till all my hallow'd soul be thine;
Plung'd in the Godhead's deepest sea,
And lost in thine immensity! p. 125.

Once more. Heavenly Adam, Life Divine,
Change my nature into thine,
Move and spread throughout my soul,
Actuate and fill the whole. p. 153.

It would be easy to cite many more passages to the same effect. But these are sufficient to show, beyond contradiction, what our sentiments then were.

10. The first tract I ever wrote expressly on this subject was published in the latter end of this year. That none might be prejudiced before they read it, I gave it the indifferent title of *The Character of a Methodist.*" In this I described a perfect Christian, placing in the front, "Not as though I had already attained." Part of it I subjoin without any alteration.

'A Methodist is one, who loves the LORD his GOD with all his heart, with all his soul, with all his mind, and with all his strength. God is the Joy of his heart, and the Desire of his soul, which is continually crying, "Whom have I in heaven but thee; and there is none upon earth whom I desire but thee. My God and my All! Thou art

the Strength of my heart, and my Portion for ever." He is therefore happy in God; yea, always happy, as having in him a well of water springing up unto everlasting life, and overflowing his soul with peace and joy. Perfect love having now cast out fear, he rejoices evermore. Yea, his joy is full, and all his bones cry out, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten me again unto a living hope of an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, reserved in heaven for me."

'And he, who hath this hope, thus full of immortality, in every thing giveth thanks, as knowing that this, (whatsoever it is,) is the Will of God in Christ Jesus concerning him. From him, therefore, he cheerfully receives all, saying, "Good is the Will of the Lord;" and whether he giveth or taketh away, equally blessing the Name of the Lord. Whether in ease or pain, whether in sickness or health, whether in life or death, he giveth thanks from the ground of the heart, to him who orders it for good; into whose hands he hath wholly committed his body and soul, as into the hands of a faithful Creator. He is, therefore, anxiously careful for nothing, as having cast all his care on him that careth for him, and in all things resting on him, after making his request known to him with thanksgiving.

'For indeed he prays without ceasing; at all times the language of his heart is this, "Unto thee is my mouth, though without a voice, and my silence speaketh unto thee." His heart is lifted up to God at all times, and in all places. In this he is never hindered, much less interrupted by any person or thing. In retirement or company, in leisure, business, or conversation, his heart is ever with the Lord. Whether he lie down or rise up, God is in all his thoughts: he walks with God continually, having the loving eye of his soul fixed on him, and every where seeing him that is invisible.

'And loving God, he loves his neighbour as himself: he loves every man as his own soul. He loves his enemies;

yea, and the enemies of God. And if it be not in his power to do good to them that hate him, yet he ceases not to pray for them, though they spurn his love, and still despitefully use him, and persecute him.

'For he is pure in heart. Love has purified his heart from envy, malice, wrath, and every unkind temper. It has cleansed him from pride, whereof only cometh contention: and he hath now "put on bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering." And indeed all possible ground for contention, on his part, is cut off. For none can take from him what he desires, seeing he "loves not the world, nor any of the things of world:" But "all his desire is unto God, and unto the the remembrance of his Name."

'Agreeable to this, his one desire, is the one design of his life, namely, "To do not his own will, but the will of him that sent him." His one intention at all times and in all places is, not to please himself, but him whom his soul loveth. He hath a single eye; and because his "eye is single, his whole body is full of light!" The whole is light, as when the bright shining of a candle doth enlighten the house. God reigns alone: all that is in the soul is Holiness to the Lord. There is not a motion in his heart but is according to his Will. Every thought that arises points to him, and is in obedience to the law of Christ.

'And the tree is known by its fruits. For as he loves God, so he keeps his commandments; not only some, or most of them, but all, from the least to the greatest. He is not content to keep the whole law, and offend in one point, but has, in all points "a conscience void of offence towards God and towards man." Whatever God has forbidden, he avoids; whatever God has enjoined, he does. "He runs the way of God's commandments," now He hath set his heart at liberty. It is his glory and joy so to do: it is his daily crown of rejoicing, to do the will of God on earth as it is done in heaven.

'All the commandments of God he accordingly keeps,

and that with all his might. For his obedience is in proportion to his love, the source from whence it flows. And therefore, loving God with all his heart, he serves him with all his strength. He continually presents his soul and body "a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God;" entirely, and without reserve, devoting himself, all he has, all he is, to his glory. All the talents he has, he constantly employs according to his Master's will: every power and faculty of his soul, every member of his body.

'By consequence, "Whatsoever he doeth, it is all to the glory of God." In all his employments of every kind, he not only aims at this, (which is implied in having a single eye,) but actually attains it. His business and his refreshments, as well as his prayers, all serve to this great end. Whether he sit in the house or walk by the way: whether he lie down, or rise up, he is promoting, in all he speaks or does, the one business of his life. Whether he put on his apparel, or labour, or eat and drink, or divert himself from too wasting labour, it all tends to advance the glory of God, by peace and good-will among men. His own invariable rule is this, "Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do it all in the Name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God, even the Father, through him."

'Nor do the customs of the world at all hinder his "running the race which is set before him." He cannot, therefore, lay up treasures on earth, no more than he can take fire into his bosom. He cannot speak evil of his neighbour, any more than he can either lie for God or man. He cannot utter an unkind word of any one; for love keeps the door of his lips. He cannot speak idl words: no corrupt conversation ever comes out of his mouth; as is all that is not good to the use of edifying, not fit to minister grace to the hearers. But "whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are just or of good report," he thinks, speaks, and acts, adorning the gospel of God our Saviour in all things.'

These are the very words in which I largely declared, for the first time, my sentiments on Christian Perfection.

And is it not easy to see, 1. That this is the very point at which I aimed all along from the year 1725? And more determinately from the year 1730, when I began to be, *homo unius libri;* a man of one Book, regarding none (comparatively) but the Bible? Is it not easy to see, 2. That this is the very same doctrine, which I believe and teach at this day; not adding one point, either to that inward or outward holiness, which I maintained eight and thirty years ago? And it is the same, which, by the grace of God, I have continued to teach from that time till now: as will appear to every impartial person, from the extracts subjoined below.

11. I do not know, that any writer has made any objection against that tract to this day. And for some time, I did not find much opposition upon that head; at least, not from serious persons. But after a time, a cry arose, and (what a little surprised me,) among religious men, who affirmed, not that I stated Perfection wrong, but that "there is no Perfection on earth;" nay, and fell vehemently on my Brother and me, for affirming the contrary. We scarce expected so rough an attack from these: especially, as we were clear on Justification by Faith, and careful to ascribe the whole of salvation to the mere grace of God. But what most surprised us was, that we are said to "dishonour Christ," by asserting that he saveth to the uttermost; by maintaining he will reign in our hearts alone, and subdue all things to himself!

12. I think it was in the latter end of the year 1740, that I had a conversation with Dr. Gibson, then Bishop of London, at Whitehall. He asked me what I meant by Perfection. I told him without any disguise or reserve. When I ceased speaking, he said, "Mr. Wesley, if this be all you mean, publish it to all the world. If any one then can confute what you say, he may have free leave." I answered, "My Lord, I will:" and accordingly wrote and published the Sermon on Christian Perfection.

In this I endeavoured to shew, "1. In what sense Christians are not: 2. In what sense they are perfect.

1. In what sense they are not. They are not perfect in knowledge. They are not free from ignorance, no nor from mistake. We are no more to expect any living man to be infallible, than to be omniscient. They are not free from infirmities, such as weakness or slowness of understanding, irregular quickness or heaviness of imagination. Such in another kind are, impropriety of language, ungracefulness of pronunciation: to which one might add a thousand nameless defects, either in conversation or behaviour. From such infirmities as these none are perfectly freed, till their spirits return to God. Neither can we expect, till then, to be wholly freed from temptation: 'For the servant is not above his master.' But neither in this sense is there any absolute perfection on earth. There is no perfection of degrees, none which does not admit of a continual increase.

II. In what sense then are they *perfect?* Observe, we are not now to speak of babes in Christ, but adult Christians. But even babes in Christ, are so far perfect as not to commit sin. This St. John affirms expressly; and it cannot be disproved by the examples of the Old Testament. For what if the holiest of the ancient Jews, did sometimes commit sin? We cannot infer from hence, that "all Christians do and must commit sin as long as they live."

"But does not the Scripture say, 'A just man sinneth seven times a day?' It does not. Indeed it says, 'A just man falleth seven times.' But this is quite another thing. For, first, the words, *a day*, are not in the text. Secondly, here is no mention of falling into sin at all. What is here mentioned, is falling into temporal affliction.

"But elsewhere Solomon says, 'There is no man that sinneth not.'" Doubtless thus it was in the days of Solomon; yea, and from Solomon to Christ there was then no man that sinned not. But whatever was the case of those under the law, we may safely affirm with St. John, that since the gospel was given, 'he that is born of God sinneth not.'

The privileges of Christians are in no wise to be mea-

sured by what the Old Testament records concerning those who were under the Jewish Dispensation; seeing the fulness of time is now come; the Holy Ghost is now given; the great salvation of God is now brought to men by the revelation of Jesus Christ. The kingdom of heaven is now set up on earth, concerning which the Spirit of God declared of old time, (so far is David from being the pattern or standard of Christian Perfection,) 'He that is feeble among them at that day, shall be as David, and the house of David shall be as the angel of the Lord before them,' Zech. xii. 8.

"But the Apostles themselves committed sin. Peter by dissembling, Paul by his sharp contention with Barnabas." Suppose they did, will you argue thus: "If two of the Apostles once committed sin, then all other Christians in all ages, do and must commit sin as long as they live?" Nay, God forbid we should thus speak. No necessity of sin was laid upon them: the grace of God was surely sufficient for them. And it is sufficient for us at this day.

"But St. James says, 'In many things we offend all.'" True; but who are the persons here spoken of? Why, those *many masters* (or teachers) whom God hath not sent. Not the Apostle himself nor any real Christian. That, in the word *we*, (used by a figure of speech common in all other, as well as the Inspired Writings,) the Apostle could not possibly include himself, or any other true believer, appears, first from the ninth verse, "Therewith bless *we* God, and therewith curse *we* men." Surely not *we Apostles!* Not *we believers!* Secondly, from the words preceding the text: "My brethren, be not many masters, (or teachers,) knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation; for in many things we offend all." We! who? Not the Apostles nor true believers, but they who were to receive the greater condemnation, because of these many offences. Nay, thirdly, the verse itself proves, that the words, *we offend all*, cannot be spoken either of all men, or all Christians. For in it immediately follows the mention of a man *who offends not*, as the *we* first

mentioned did: from whom therefore he is professedly contradistinguished, and pronounced a *perfect man.*

"But St. John himself says, "If we say that we have no sin we deceive ourselves. And if we say we have not sinned we make him a liar, and his word is not in us."

I answer, 1. The tenth verse fixes the sense of the eighth. 'If we say we have no sin,' in the former, being explained by, 'If we say we have not sinned,' in the latter verse. 2. The point under consideration is not, whether we have or have not sinned heretofore, and neither of these verses asserts that we do sin, or commit sin now. 3. The ninth verse explains both the eighth and tenth. 'If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just, to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.' As if he had said, I have before affirmed, 'The blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin.' And no man can say, I need it not; I have no sin to be cleansed from. 'If we say, we have no sin, that we have not sinned, we deceive ourselves,' and make God a liar. But 'if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just,' not only 'to forgive us our sins, but also to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.' that we may 'go and sin no more.' In conformity, therefore, both to the doctrine of St. John, and the whole tenor of the New Testament, we fix this conclusion, A Christian is so far perfect as not to commit sin.

This is the glorious privilege of every Christian, yea, though he be but a babe in Christ. But it is only of grown Christians it can be affirmed, they are in such a sense perfect, as, secondly, to be freed from evil thoughts and evil tempers. First, from evil or sinful thoughts. Indeed whence should they spring? 'Out of the heart of man,' if at all, 'proceed evil thoughts.' If therefore the heart be no longer evil, then evil thoughts no longer proceed out of it. For 'a good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit.'

And as they are freed from evil thoughts, so likewise from evil tempers. Every one of these can say with St. Paul, 'I am crucified with Christ: Nevertheless I live;

yet not I, but Christ liveth in me:' Words that manifestly describe a deliverance from inward, as well as from outward sin. This is expressed both negatively, 'I live not;' my evil nature, the body of sin is destroyed; and positively, 'Christ liveth in me,' and therefore all that is holy, and just, and good. Indeed both these, 'Christ liveth in me,' and 'I live not,' are inseparably connected. For what communion hath light with darkness, or Christ with Belial?

He, therefore, who liveth in these Christians, hath purified their hearts by faith; insomuch that every one, who has Christ in him, the hope of glory, purifieth himself even as he is pure. He is purified from pride; for Christ was lowly in heart. He is pure from evil-desire and self-will; for Christ desired only to do the will of his Father. And he is pure from anger, in the common sense of the word; for Christ was meek and gentle. I say in the common sense of the word; for he is angry at sin, while he is grieved for the sinner. He feels a displacency at every offence against God, but only tender compassion to the offender.

Thus doth Jesus save his people from their sins, not only from outward sins, but from the sins of their hearts. "True," say some, "but not till death; not in this world." Nay, St. John says, 'Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment, because as he was, so are we in this world.' The Apostle here, beyond all contradiction, speaks of himself and other living Christians, of whom he flatly affirms, that not only at or after death, but in this world, they are as their Master.

Exactly agreeable to this are his words in the first chapter: 'God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.' And again: 'If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.' Now it is evident, the Apostle here speaks of a deliverance wrought in this world. For he saith not, The blood of Christ will

cleanse, (at the hour of death, or in the day of judgment,) but it cleanseth at the time present, us living Christians, from all sin. And it is equally evident, that if any sin remain, we are not cleansed from all sin. If any unrighteousness remain in the soul, it is not cleansed from all unrighteousness. Neither let any say, that this relates to justification only, or cleansing us from the guilt of sin: First, because this is confounding together what the Apostle clearly distinguishes, who mentions first, 'to forgive us our sins,' and then, 'to cleanse us from all unrighteousness:' Secondly, because this is asserting justification by works in the strongest sense possible. It is making all inward as well as all outward holiness, necessarily previous to justification. For if the cleansing here spoken of be no more than cleansing us from the guilt of sin, then we are not cleansed from guilt; that is, not justified, unless on condition of walking in the light as he is in the light. It remains then that Christians are saved in this world from all sin, from all unrighteousness; that they are now in such a sense perfect as not to commit sin, and to be freed from evil thoughts and evil tempers."

It could not be but that a discourse of this kind, which directly contradicted the favourite opinion of many, who were esteemed by others, and possibly esteemed themselves, some of the best Christians, (whereas, if these things were so, they were not Christians at all,) should give no small offence. Many answers or animadversions therefore were expected: but I was agreeably disappointed. I do not know that any appeared: so I went quietly on my way.

13. Not long after, I think in the spring, 1741, we published a second volume of Hymns. As the doctrine was still much misunderstood, and consequently misrepresented, I judged it needful to explain yet farther upon the head, which was done in the Preface to it as follows:

"This great gift of God, the salvation of our souls, is no other than the image of God fresh stamped on our hearts. It is 'a renewal in the spirit of our minds, after the likeness of him that created them.' God hath now laid the

axe unto the root of the tree, purifying their hearts by faith, and 'cleansing all the thoughts of their hearts by the inspiration of his Holy Spirit.' Having this hope, that they shall see God as he is, they purify themselves even as he is pure; and are holy, as he that hath called them is holy, in all manner of conversation. Not that they have already attained all that they shall attain, either are already (in this sense) perfect. But they daily 'go on from strength to strength;' 'beholding now, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, they are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, by the Spirit of the Lord.'

"And where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty, such liberty, from the law of sin and death, as the children of this world will not believe, though a man declare it unto them. The Son hath made them free who are thus born of God, from that great root of sin and bitterness, Pride. They feel that all their sufficiency is of God; that it is he alone who is in all their thoughts, and worketh in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure. They feel, that it is not they that speak, but the Spirit of their Father who speaketh in them, and that whatsoever is done by their hands, the Father who is in them, he doeth the works. So that God is to them all in all, and they are nothing in his sight. They are freed from self-will, as desiring nothing but the holy and perfect will of God: not supplies in want, not ease* in pain, nor life, or death, or any creature, but continually crying in their inmost soul, 'Father, thy Will be done.' They are freed from evil thoughts, so that they cannot enter into them; no, not for a moment. Aforetime, when an evil thought came in, they looked up, and it vanished away. But now it does not come in, there being no room for this, in a soul which is full of God. They are free from wanderings in prayer. Whensoever they pour out their hearts in a more immediate manner before God,

* This is too strong. Our Lord himself desired ease in pain. He asked for it, only with resignation; *Not as I will*, I desire, *but as thou wilt.*

they have * no thought of any thing past, or absent, or to come, but of God alone. In times past they had wandering thoughts darted in, which yet fled away like smoke: but now that smoke does not rise at all. They have no fear or doubt, either as to their state in general, or as to any † particular action. The unction from the Holy One teacheth ‡ them every hour, what they shall do, and what they shall speak. Nor, therefore, have they § any need to reason concerning it. They are, in one sense, freed from temptations: for though numberless temptations fly about them, yet they ‖ trouble them not. At all times their souls are even and calm, their hearts are steadfast and unmovable: their peace, flowing as a river, passeth all understanding, and they rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. For ¶ they are sealed by the Spirit unto the day of redemption, having the witness in themselves, that there is laid up for them a crown of righteousnesss, which the Lord will give them in that day.

"Not that every one is a child of the devil, till he is thus renewed in love. On the contrary, whoever has 'a sure confidence in God, that through the merits of Christ, his sins are forgiven,' he is a child of God; and if he abide in him, an heir of all the promises. Neither ought he in any wise to cast away his confidence, or to deny the faith he has received, because it is weak, or because it is tried with fire, so that his soul is in heaviness, through manifold temptations.

"Neither dare we affirm, as some have done, that all this salvation is given at once. There is indeed an instantaneous (as well as gradual,) work of God in his children: and there

* This is far too strong. See the Sermon on *Wandering Thoughts*.

† Frequently this is the case; but only *for a time*.

‡ For a time it may be so: but not always.

§ Sometimes they have no need: at other times they have.

‖ Sometimes they do not: at other times they do, and that grievously.

¶ Not all who are saved from sin: Many of them have not attained it yet.

wants not, we know, a cloud of witnesses, who have received in one moment, either a clear sense of the forgiveness of their sins, or the abiding witness of the Holy Spirit. But we do not know a single instance, in any place, of a person's receiving, in one and the same moment, remission of sins, the abiding witness of the Spirit, and a new, a clean heart.

"Indeed, how God may work, we cannot tell: but the general manner, wherein he does work, is this: those, who once trusted in themselves, that they were righteous; that they were rich, and increased in goods, and had need of nothing, are, by the Spirit of God applying his word, convinced that they are poor and naked. All the things that they have done, are brought to their remembrance, and set in array before them, so that they see the wrath of God hanging over their heads, and feel that they deserve the damnation of hell. In their trouble they cry unto the Lord, and he shews them, that he hath taken away their sins, and opens the kingdom of heaven in their hearts, righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. Sorrow and pain are fled away, and sin hath no more dominion over them. Knowing they are justified freely through faith in his blood, they 'have peace with God through Jesus Christ; they rejoice in hope of the glory of God, and the love of God is shed abroad in their hearts.'

"In this peace they remain for days, or weeks, or months, and commonly suppose, that they shall not know war any more; till some of their old enemies, their bosom sins, or the sin which did most easily beset them, (perhaps anger or desire,) assault them again, and thrust sore at them that they may fall. Then arises fear, that they should not endure to the end, and often doubt whether God has not forgotten them, or whether they did not deceive themselves, in thinking their sins were forgiven. Under these clouds, especially if they reason with the devil, they go mourning all the day long. But it is seldom long before their Lord answers for himself, sending them the Holy Spirit to comfort them, to bear witness continually with their spirits, that

they are the children of God. Then they are, indeed, meek, and gentle, and [illegible]able, even as a little child. And now * first do they see the ground of their heart, which God before would not disclose unto them, lest the soul should fail before him, and the spirit which he had made. Now they see all the hidden abominations there, the depths of pride, self-will, and hell; yet having the witness in themselves, 'Thou art an heir of God, a joint heir with Christ, even in the midst of this fiery trial;' which continually heightens both the strong sense they then have, of their inability to help themselves, and the inexpressible hunger they feel after a full renewal in his image, in righteousness and true holiness. Then God is mindful of the desire of them that fear him, and gives them a single eye, and a pure heart; he stamps upon them his own image and superscription: he creates them anew in Christ Jesus: He cometh unto them with his Son and blessed Spirit, and fixing his abode in their souls, bringeth them into the rest which remaineth for the people of God."

Here I cannot but remark, 1. That this is the strongest account we ever gave of Christian Perfection: indeed too strong in more than one particular, as is observed in the notes annexed: 2. That there is nothing which we have since advanced upon the subject, either in verse or prose, which is not either directly or indirectly contained in this preface. So that whether our present doctrine be right or wrong, it is however the same which we taught from the beginning.

14. I need not give additional proofs of this, by multiplying quotations from the volume itself. It may suffice, to cite part of one hymn only, the last of that volume.

* Is it not astonishing, that while this book is extant, which was published four and twenty years ago, any one should face me down, That this is a new doctrine, and what I never taught?

Lord, I believe a rest remains,
To all thy people known,
A rest, where pure enjoyment reigns,
And thou art lov'd alone:

A rest, where all our souls desire
Is fix'd on things above:
Where doubt, and pain, and fear expire,
Cast out by perfect Love.

From every evil motion freed,
(The Son hath made us free,)
On all the powers of hell we tread,
In glorious liberty.

Safe in the way of life, above
Death, earth, and hell we rise;
We find, when perfected in love,
Our long-sought Paradise.

O that I now the rest may know,
Believe and enter in!
Now, Saviour, now, the power bestow,
And let me cease from sin!

Remove this hardness from my heart,
This unbelief remove:
To me the rest of faith impart,
The Sabbath of thy Love.

Come, O my Saviour, come away!
Into my soul descend!
No longer from thy creature stay,
My Author and my End.

The bliss thou hast for me prepar'd,
No longer be delay'd:
Come, my exceeding great reward,
For whom I first was made.

Come, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
And seal me thine abode!
Let all I am in thee be lost:
Let all be lost in God.

Can any thing be more clear, than, 1. That here also is as full and high a salvation as we have ever spoken of? 2. That this is spoken of as receivable by mere faith, and as hindered only by unbelief? 3. That this faith, and consequently the salvation which it brings, is spoken of as given in an instant? 4. That it is supposed that instant may be now: That we need not stay another moment: That now, the very now, is the accepted time? Now is the day of this full salvation? And, lastly, that, if any speak otherwise, he is the person that brings new doctrines among us?

15. About a year after, namely, in the year 1742, we published another volume of hymns. The dispute being now at the height, we spoke upon the head more largely than ever before. Accordingly, abundance of the hymns in this volume treat expressly on this subject. And so does the Preface, which, as it is short, it may not be amiss to insert entire.

"1. Perhaps the general prejudice against Christian Perfection, may chiefly arise from a misapprehension of the Nature of it. We willingly allow and continually declare, there is no such perfection in this life, as implies either a dispensation from doing good, and attending all the ordinances of God, or a freedom from ignorance, mistake, temptation, and a thousand infirmities necessarily connected with flesh and blood.

"2. First, we not only allow, but earnestly contend, that there is no Perfection in this life, which implies any dispensation from attending all the ordinances of God, or from doing good unto all men while we have time, though especially unto the household of faith. We believe, that not only the babes in Christ, who have newly found redemption in his blood, but those also who are grown up into perfect men, are indispensably obliged, as often as they have opportunity, to eat bread and drink wine in remembrance of Him, and to search the Scriptures: by fasting, as well as temperance, to keep their bodies under, and bring them

into subjection: and above all, to pour out their souls in prayer, both secretly and in the great congregation.

"3. We, secondly, believe, that there is no such perfection in this life, as implies an entire deliverance, either from ignorance or mistake, in things not essential to salvation, or from manifold temptations, or from numberless infirmities, wherewith the corruptible body more or less, presses down the soul. We cannot find any ground in Scripture to suppose, that any inhabitant of a house of clay, is wholly exempt, either from bodily infirmities, or from ignorance of many things; or to imagine any is incapable of mistake, or falling into divers temptations.

"4. But what then do you mean by one that is *perfect?*" We mean one in whom is the mind which was in Christ, and who so walketh as Christ also walked: a man that hath clean hands and a pure heart, or that is cleansed from all filthiness of flesh and spirit; one in whom is no occasion of stumbling, and who accordingly does not commit sin. To declare this a little more particularly; we understand by that scriptural expression, a perfect man, one in whom God hath fulfilled his faithful word, "From all your filthiness, and from all your idols will I cleanse you: I will also save you from all your uncleannesses." We understand hereby, one whom God "hath sanctified throughout, in body, soul, and spirit: one who walketh in the light, as He is in the light; in whom is no darkness at all; the Blood of Jesus Christ his Son, having cleansed him from all sin."

"5. This man can now testify to all mankind, 'I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live: yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.' He is holy, as God who calleth him is holy, both in heart and in all manner of conversation. He loveth the Lord his God with all his heart, and serveth him with all his strength. He loveth his neighbour, every man, as himself; yea, as Christ loveth us; them in particular, that 'despitefully use him, and persecute him,' 'because they know not the Son, neither the Father.' Indeed his soul is all love, filled with 'bowels of mercies,

kindness, meekness, gentleness, long-suffering.' And his life agreeth thereto, full of the work of faith, the patience of hope, the labour of love. And whatsoever he doth either in word or deed, he doth it all in the name, in the love, and power of the Lord Jesus. In a word, he doth 'the will of God on earth, as it is done in heaven.'

"6. This *is* to be a perfect man, to be sanctified throughout; even 'to have a heart so all-flaming with the love of God, (to use Archbishop Usher's words,) as continually to offer up every thought, word, and work, as a spiritual sacrifice, acceptable to God, through Christ.' In every thought of our hearts, in every word of our tongues, in every work of our hands, to 'shew forth his praise, who hath called us out of darkness into his marvellous light.' O that we, and all who seek the Lord Jesus in sincerity, may thus be made perfect in one!"

This is the doctrine we preached from the beginning, and which we preach this day. Indeed, in viewing it in every point of light, and comparing it again and again, with the word of God on the one hand, and the experience of the children of God on the other, we saw farther into the nature and properties of Christian Perfection. But still there is no contrariety at all, between our first and our last sentiments. Our first conception of it was, It is to have the mind which was in Christ, and to walk as he walked. To have all the mind that was in him, and always to walk as he walked. In other words, to be inwardly and outwardly devoted to God: all devoted in heart and life. And we have the same conception of it now, without either addition or diminution.

16. The hymns concerning it in this volume are too numerous to transcribe. I shall only cite a part of three.

Saviour, from sin, I wait to prove,
  That Jesus is thy healing Name;
To lose, when perfected in love,
  Whate'er I have, or can, or am:
I stay me on thy faithful word,
"The servant shall be as his Lord."

Answer that gracious end in me,
  For which thy precious life was given;
Redeem from ALL iniquity,
  Restore, and make me meet for heaven:
Unless thou purge my every stain,
Thy suffering, and my faith are vain.

Didst thou not die, that I might live
  No longer to myself but thee?
Might body, soul, and spirit give
  To him, who gave himself for me?
Come then, my Master, and my God,
Take the dear purchase of thy Blood.

Thy own peculiar servant claim,
  For thy own truth and mercy's sake;
Hallow in me thy glorious Name;
  Me for thine own this moment take,
And change, and throughly purify:
Thine only may I live and die.

Chose from the world, if now I stand,
  Adorn'd with righteousness divine;
If brought into the promis'd land,
  I justly call the Saviour mine:
Thy sanctifying Spirit pour,
  To quench my thirst and wash me clean;
Now, Saviour, let the Spirit shower;
  Descend, and make me pure from sin.

Purge me from every sinful blot;
  My idols all be cast aside:
Cleanse me from every evil thought,
  From all the filth of self and pride.
The hatred of the carnal mind,
  Out of my flesh at once remove:
Give me a tender heart resign'd,
  And pure, and full of faith and love.

O that I now from sin releas'd,
  Thy word might to the utmost prove,

Enter into the promis'd Rest,
  The Canaan of thy perfect love.
Now let me gain perfection's height!
  Now let me into nothing fall;
Be less than nothing in my sight,
  And feel that Christ is all in all. Page 253.

Lord, I believe thy work of grace
  Is perfect in the soul;
His heart is pure, who sees thy face,
  His spirit is made whole.
From every sickness by thy word,
  From every sore disease
Sav'd, and to perfect health restor'd,
  To perfect holiness.

He walks in glorious liberty,
  To sin entirely dead;
The Truth, the Son hath made him free,
  And he is free indeed.
Throughout his soul thy glories shine,
  His soul is all renew'd,
And deck'd in righteousness divine,
  And cloth'd, and fill'd with God.

This is the rest, the life, the peace,
  Which all thy people prove;
Love is the bond of perfectness,
  And all their soul is love,
O joyful sound of gospel-grace!
  Christ shall in me appear;
I, even I, shall see his Face,
  I shall be holy here.

He visits now the house of clay,
  He shakes his future home;—
O would'st thou, Lord, on this glad day
  Into thy temple come!
Come, O my God, thyself reveal,
  Fill all this mighty void;

Thou only canst my spirit fill:
  Come, O my God, my God!
Fulfil, fulfil my large desires,
  Large as infinity!
Give, give me all my soul requires,
  All, all that is in thee! Page 293.

17. On Monday, June 25, 1744, our first Conference began, six clergymen, and all our preachers being present. The next morning we seriously considered the doctrine of Sanctification or Perfection. The questions asked concerning it, and the substance of the answers given, were as follows.

Q. What is it to be *sanctified*?

A. To be renewed in the image of God, *in righteousness and true holiness*.

Q. What is implied in being a *perfect christian*?

A. The loving God with all our heart, and mind, and soul, Deut. vi. 5.

Q. Does this imply, that *all inward sin* is taken away?

A. Undoubtedly: or how can we be said to be *cleansed from all uncleanness*? Ezek. xxxvi.

Our second Conference began Aug. 1, 1745. The next morning we spoke of Sanctification as follows.

Q. When does inward Sanctification begin?

A. In a moment a man is justified. Yet sin remains in him; yea, the seed of sin, till he is *sanctified throughout*. From that time a believer gradually dies to sin, and grows in grace.

Q. Is this ordinarily not given till a little before death?

A. It is not to those, who expect it no sooner.

Q. But may we expect it sooner?

A. Why not? For although we grant, 1. That the generality of believers, whom we have hitherto known, were not sanctified till near death: 2. That few of those, to whom St. Paul wrote his Epistles, were so at that time: Nor, 3, He himself at the time of writing his former Epistles: yet all this does not prove, that we may not be so *to-day*.

Q. In what manner should we preach sanctification?

A. Scarcely at all to those who are not pressing forward: to those who are, always by way of promise; always *drawing*, rather than *driving*.

Our third Conference began Tuesday, May 26, 1746.

In this we carefully read over the Minutes of the two preceding Conferences, to observe whether any thing contained therein might be retrenched or altered upon more mature consideration. But we did not see cause to alter in any respect, what we had agreed upon before.

Our fourth Conference began on Tuesday, June 16, 1747. As several persons were present who did not believe the doctrine of Perfection, we agreed to examine it from the foundation.

In order to this, it was asked,

Q. "How much is allowed by our brethren, who differ from us, with regard to entire sanctification?"

A. They grant, 1. That every one must be entirely sanctified in the article of death: 2. That, till then, a believer daily grows in grace, comes nearer and nearer to perfection: 3, That we ought to be continually pressing after it, and to exhort all others so to do.

Q. What do we allow them?

A. We grant, 1. That many of those who have died in the faith, yea, the greater part of those we have known, were not *perfected in love*, till a little before their death: 2. That the term *sanctified*, is continually applied by St. Paul, to all that were justified: 3. That by this term alone, he rarely, if ever, means, "Saved from all sin:" 4. That consequently it is not proper to use it in that sense, without adding the word *wholly*, *entirely*, or the like: 5. That the inspired writers almost continually speak of or to those who were justified, but very rarely of or to those who were totally sanctified:* 6. That consequently it behoves us to speak almost continually of the state of justification;

* That is, unto those alone, exclusive of others; but they speak to them, jointly with others, almost continually.

but more rarely, at least † in full and explicit terms, concerning entire sanctification.

Q. What then is the point where we divide?

A. It is this: Should we expect to be saved from *all sin* before the article of death?

Q. Is there any clear Scripture *promise* of this, That God will save us from *all sin?*

A. There is, Psalm cxxx. 8, "He shall redeem Israel from all his sins."

This is more largely expressed in the prophecy of Ezekiel; "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean; from all your filthiness, and from all your idols will I cleanse you.—I will also save you from all your uncleannesses," chap. xxxvi. ver. 25, 29. No promise can be more clear. And to this the Apostle plainly refers in that exhortation, "Having these promises, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God," 2 Cor. vii. 1. Equally clear and express is that ancient promise, "The Lord thy God will circumcise thy heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul," Deut. xxx. 6.

Q. But does any *assertion* answerable to this, occur in the New Testament?

A. There does, and that laid down in the plainest terms. So 1 John iii. 8, "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil:" the works of the devil, without any limitation or restriction; but all sin is the work of the devil. Parallel to which is the assertion of St. Paul, Eph. v. 25, 27, "Christ loved the Church and gave himself for it,—that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it might be holy and without blemish."

And to the same effect is his assertion in the eighth of the

† More rarely I allow; but yet in some places very frequently, strongly, and explicitly

Romans, ver. 3, 4, "God sent his Son—that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit."

Q. Does the New Testament afford any farther ground for expecting to be saved from *all sin?*

A. Undoubtedly it does, both in those *prayers* and *commands*, which are equivalent to the strongest assertions.

Q. What *prayers* do you mean?

A. Prayers for entire sanctification, which, were there no such thing, would be mere mockery of God. Such in particular are, 1. "Deliver us from evil." Now when this is done, when we are delivered from all evil, there can be no sin remaining. 2. "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also who shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me and I in thee, that they also may be one in us; I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one," John xvii. 20, 21, 23. 3. "I bow my knees unto the God and Father of our Lord Jesus—that he would grant you—that ye being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge. That ye may be filled with all the fulness of God," Eph. iii. 14, &c. 4. "The very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God, your whole spirit, soul, and body, may be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ," 1 Thes. v. 23.

Q. What *command* is there to the same effect?

A. 1. "Be ye perfect, as your Father who is in heaven is perfect," Matt. v. 48. 2. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind," Matt. xxii. 37. But if the love of God fill *all the heart*, there can be no sin there.

Q. But how does it appear, that this is to be done before the article of death?

A. 1. From the very nature of a command, which is not given to the dead, but to the living. Therefore, "Thou

shalt love God with all thy heart," cannot mean, Thou shalt do this when thou diest, but while thou livest.

2. From express texts of Scripture. 1. "The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men; teaching, that having renounced ungodly and worldly lusts, we should *live* soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world: looking for the glorious appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works," Tit. ii. 11—14. 2. "He hath raised up an horn of salvation for us; to perform the mercy promised to our Fathers; the oath which he sware to our father Abraham, that he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, should serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness, before him, all the days of our life," Luke i. 62, &c.

Q. Is there any example in Scripture of persons who have attained to this?

A. Yes, St. John, and all those of whom he says, "Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment, because as he is, so are we in this world," 1 John iv. 17.

Q. Can you shew one such example now? Where is he that is thus perfect?

A. To some that make this inquiry, one might answer, If I knew one here, I would not tell *you:* for you do not inquire out of love. You are like Herod. You only seek the young child to slay it.

But more directly we answer. There are many reasons, why there should be few, if any, *indisputable* examples. What inconveniences would this bring on the person himself, set as a mark for all to shoot at! And how unprofitable would it be to gainsayers! "For if they hear not Moses and the Prophets," Christ and his Apostles, "neither would they be persuaded though one rose from the dead."

Q. Are we not apt to have a secret distaste to any who say they are saved from all sin?

A. It is very possible we may, and that upon several

grounds: partly from a concern for the good of souls, who may be hurt, if these are not what they profess; partly from a kind of implicit envy at those who speak of higher attainments than our own; and partly from our natural slowness and unreadiness of heart, to believe the works of God.

Q. Why may we not continue in the joy of faith till we are *perfected in love?*

A. Why indeed! Since even holy grief does not quench this joy: since even while we are under the cross, while we deeply partake of the sufferings of Christ, we may rejoice with joy unspeakable.

From these extracts it undeniably appears, not only what was mine and my brother's judgment, but what was the judgment of all the Preachers in connexion with us, in the years 44, 45, 46, and 47. Nor do I remember, that in any of these Conferences we had one dissenting voice: but whatever doubts any one had when we met, they were all removed before we parted.

18. In the year 1749, my brother printed two volumes of *Hymns and Sacred Poems.* As I did not see these before they were published, there were some things in them which I did not approve of. But I quite approved of the main of the hymns on this head; a few verses of which are subjoined:

Come, Lord, be manifested here,
  And *all the devil's works* destroy;
Now, without sin, in me appear,
  And fill with everlasting joy:
Thy beatific face display:
Thy presence is the perfect day. Vol. I. p. 202.
  Swift to my rescue come,
  Thy own *this moment* seize!
Gather my wandering spirit home,
  And keep in perfect peace.
  Suffer'd no more to rove
  O'er all the earth abroad,
Arrest the prisoner of thy love,
  And shut me up in God! p. 247.

Thy pris'ners release, vouchsafe us thy peace:
And our sorrows and sins *in a moment* shall cease.
That moment be now! our petition allow,
Our *present* Redeemer and Comforter thou! Vol. II. p. 124.

From this inbred sin deliver
Let the yoke *Now* be broke;
Make me thine for ever.
Partner of thy perfect nature,
Let me be *Now* in thee
A new sinless creature. p. 156.

Turn me, Lord, and turn me now,
To thy yoke my spirit bow:
Grant me now the pearl to find
Of a meek and quiet mind.
Calm, O calm my troubled breast;
Let me gain that second rest:
From my works for ever cease,
Perfected in holiness. p. 161.

Come in this accepted hour,
Bring thy heavenly kingdom in;
Fill us with thy glorious power,
Rooting out the seeds of sin. p. 163.

Come, thou dear Lamb, for sinners slain,
Bring in the cleansing flood;
Apply to wash out *every stain*,
Thine efficacious blood.
O let it sink into our soul,
Deep as the inbred sin;
Make every wounded spirit whole,
And every leper clean! p. 171.

Pris'ners of hope, arise;
And see your Lord appear,
Lo! on the wings of love he flies,
And brings redemption near.
Redemption through his blood
He calls you to receive:
"Come unto me, the pard'ning God:
"Believe," he cries, "believe!"

Jesus, to thee we look,
'Till sav'd from sin's remains,
Reject the inbred tyrant's yoke,
And cast away his chains.
Our nature shall no more
O'er us dominion have:
By faith we apprehend the power
Which shall for ever save. p. 188.
JESU, our Life, in us appear,
Who daily die thy death:
Reveal thyself the Finisher:
Thy quick'ning Spirit breathe:
Unfold the hidden mystery,
The second gift impart;
Reveal thy glorious self in me;
In every waiting heart. p. 194.

In Him we have peace, In him we have power:
Preserv'd by his grace, Throughout the dark hour;
In all our temptation He keeps us to prove
His utmost salvation, His fulness of love.
Pronounce the glad word, And bid us be free;
Ah, hast thou not, Lord, A blessing for me?
The peace thou hast given, *This moment* impart,
And open thy heaven, O Love, in my heart. p. 323.

A second edition of these hymns was published in the year 1755: and that without any other alteration than that of a few literal mistakes.

I have been the more large in these extracts, because hence it appears, beyond all possibility of exception, that to this day, both my brother and I maintained, 1, That Christian Perfection is that love of God and our neighbour, which implies deliverance from *all sin*: 2, That this is received merely *by faith*: 3, That it is given *instantaneously*, in one moment: 4, That we are to expect it not at death, but *every moment*: that *now* is the accepted time, *now* is the day of this salvation.

19. At the Conference in the year 1759, perceiving some danger, that a diversity of sentiments should insensibly

steal in among us, we again largely considered this doctrine. And soon after, I published *Thoughts on Christian Perfection*, prefaced with the following advertisement:

"The following Tract is by no means designed to gratify the curiosity of any man. It is not intended to prove the doctrine at large, in opposition to those, who explode and ridicule it: no, nor to answer the numerous objections against it, which may be raised even by serious men. All I intend here is, simply to declare, what are my sentiments on this head; what Christian Perfection does, according to my apprehension, include, and what it does not; and to add a few practical observations and directions, relative to the subject.

"As these thoughts were at first thrown together by way of question and answer, I let them continue in the same form.—They are just the same that I have entertained for above twenty years."

Q. What is Christian Perfection?

A. The loving God with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength. This implies, that no wrong temper, none contrary to love, remains in the soul; and that all the thoughts, words, and actions, are governed by pure love.

Q. Do you affirm, that this perfection excludes all infirmities, ignorance, and mistake?

A. I continually affirm quite the contrary, and always have done so.

Q. But how can every thought, word, and work, be governed by pure love, and the man be subject at the same time to ignorance and mistake?

A. I see no contradiction here. "A man may be filled with pure love, and still be liable to mistake." Indeed I do not expect to be freed from actual mistakes, till this mortal put on immortality. I believe this to be a natural consequence of the soul's dwelling in flesh and blood. For we cannot now *think* at all, but by the mediation of those bodily organs, which have suffered equally with the rest of our frame. And hence we cannot avoid sometimes *thinking wrong*, till this corruptible shall have put on incorruption.

But we may carry this thought farther yet. A mistake in judgment may possibly occasion a mistake in practice. For instance: Mr. De Renty's mistake touching the nature of mortification, arising from prejudice of education, occasioned that practical mistake, his wearing an iron girdle. And a thousand such instances there may be, even in those who are in the highest state of grace. Yet, where every word and action springs from love, such a mistake is not properly *a sin*. However, it cannot bear the rigour of God's justice, but needs the atoning blood.

Q. What was the judgment of all our brethren, who met at Bristol in August, 1758, on this head?

A It was expressed in these words: 1. Every one may mistake as long as he lives. 2. A mistake in *opinion* may occasion a *mistake* in practice. 3. Every such mistake is a transgression of the perfect law. Therefore, 4. Every such mistake, were it not for the blood of atonement, would expose to eternal damnation. 5. It follows, that the most perfect have continual need of the merits of Christ, even for their actual transgressions, and may say for themselves, as well as for their brethren, "Forgive us our trespasses."

This easily accounts for what might otherwise seem to be utterly unaccountable: namely, that those who are not offended, when we speak of the highest degree of love, yet will not hear of living *without sin*. The reason is, they know all men are liable to mistake, and that in practice as well as in judgment. But they do not know, or do not observe, that this is not sin, if love is the sole principle of action.

Q. But still, if they live without sin, does not this exclude the necessity of a Mediator? At least, is it not plain, that they stand no longer in need of Christ in his priestly office?

A. Far from it. None feel their need of Christ like these; none so entirely depend upon him. For Christ does not give life to the soul separate from, but in and with himself. Hence his words are equally true of all men, in whatsoever state of grace they are: "As the branch cannot bear

fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, no more can ye, except ye abide in me: without (or separate from) me, ye can do nothing."

In every state we need Christ in the following respects: 1. Whatever grace we receive, it is a free gift from him. 2. We receive it as his purchase, merely in consideration of the price he paid. 3. We have this grace not merely from Christ, but in him. For our perfection is not like that of a tree, which flourishes by the sap, derived from its own root, but, as was said before, like that of a branch, which, united to the vine, bears fruit, but severed from it, is dried up and withered. 4. All our blessings, temporal, spiritual, and eternal, depend on his intercession for us, which is one branch of his priestly office, whereof therefore we have always equal need. 5. The best of men still need Christ in his priestly office to atone for their omissions, their shortcomings, (as some not improperly speak,) their mistakes in judgment and practice, and their defects of various kinds. For these are all deviations from the perfect law, and consequently need an atonement. Yet that they are not properly sins, we apprehend may appear from the words of St. Paul, "He that loveth hath fulfilled the law, for love is the fulfilling of the law," Rom. xiii. 10, 12. Now mistakes, and whatever infirmities naturally flow from the corruptible state of the body, are no way contrary to love, nor therefore in the Scripture sense, *sin*.

To explain myself a little farther on this head. 1. Not only *sin, properly so called*, that is, voluntary transgression of a known law, but sin improperly, so called, that is, an involuntary transgression of a divine law, known or unknown, needs the atoning blood. 2. I believe there is no such perfection in this life, as excludes these involuntary transgressions, which, I apprehend, to be naturally consequent on the ignorance and mistakes inseparable from mortality. 3. Therefore *sinless perfection* is a phrase I never use, lest I should *seem* to contradict myself. 4. I believe a person filled with the love of God, is still liable to these involuntary transgressions. 5. Such transgressions you may

call *sins*, if you please: I do not, for the reasons above-mentioned.

Q. What advice would you give to those that do, and to those that do not, call them so?

A. Let those who do not call them *sins*, never think that themselves, or any other persons, are in such a state, as that they can stand before infinite Justice without a Mediator. This must argue either the deepest ignorance, or the highest arrogance and presumption.

Let those who do call them so, beware how they confound these *defects* with *sins*, properly so called.

But how will they avoid it? How will these be distinguished from those, if they are all promiscuously called *sins*? I am much afraid, if we should allow any *sins* to be consistent with perfection, few would confine the idea to those *defects*, concerning which only the assertion could be true.

Q. But how can a liableness to mistake consist with perfect love? Is not a person, who is perfected in love, every moment under its influence? And can any mistake flow from pure love?

A. I answer, 1. Many mistakes may *consist* with pure love. 2. Some may accidentally flow from it. I mean, love itself may incline us to mistake. The pure love of our neighbour, springing from the love of God, thinketh no evil, believeth and hopeth all things. Now this very temper, unsuspicious, ready to believe and hope the best of all men, may occasion our thinking some men better than they really are. Here then is a manifest mistake, accidentally flowing from pure love.

Q. How shall we avoid setting perfection too high or too low?

A. By keeping to the Bible, and setting it just as high as the Scripture does. It is nothing higher and nothing lower than this: the pure love of God and man; the loving God with all our heart and soul, and our neighbour as ourselves. It is love governing the heart and life, running through all our tempers, words, and actions.

Q. Suppose one had attained to this, would you advise him to speak of it?

A. At first perhaps he would scarcely be able to refrain, the fire would be so hot within him; his desire to declare the loving-kindness of the Lord, carrying him away like a torrent. But afterwards he might; and then it would be advisable, not to speak of it to them that know not God. It is most likely, it would only provoke them to contradict and blaspheme: nor to others without some particular reason, without some good in view. And then he should have especial care to avoid all appearance of boasting, to speak with the deepest humility and reverence, giving all the glory to God.

Q. But would it not be better, to be entirely silent; not to speak of it at all?

A. By silence he might avoid many crosses, which will naturally and necessarily ensue, if he simply declare, even among believers, what God has wrought in his soul. If therefore such a one were to confer with flesh and blood, he would be entirely silent. But this could not be done with a clear conscience; for undoubtedly he ought to speak. Men do not light a candle to put it under a bushel: much less does the all-wise God. He does not raise such a monument of his power and love, to hide it from all mankind. Rather he intends it as a general blessing, to those who are simple of heart. He designs thereby not barely the happiness of that individual person, but the animating and encouraging others, to follow after the same blessing. His will is, "that many shall see it, and rejoice, and put their trust in the Lord." Nor does any thing under heaven more quicken the desires of those who are justified, than to converse with those whom they believe to have experienced a still higher salvation. This places that salvation full in their view, and increases their hunger and thirst after it: an advantage which must have been entirely lost, had the person so saved buried himself in silence.

Q. But is there no way to prevent those crosses, which usually fall on those who speak of being thus saved?

A. It seems they cannot be prevented altogether, while so much of nature remains even in believers. But something might be done, if the Preacher in every place would, 1. Talk freely with all who speak thus: and, 2. Labour to prevent the unjust or unkind treatment of those, in favour of whom there is reasonable proof.

Q. What is reasonable proof? How may we certainly know one that is saved from all sin?

A. We cannot *infallibly* know one that is thus saved, (no, nor even one that is justified,) unless it should please God to endow us with the miraculous discernment of spirits. But we apprehend these would be sufficient proofs to any reasonable man, and such as would leave little room to doubt, either the truth or the depth of the work: 1. If we had clear evidence of his exemplary behaviour, for some time before this supposed change. This would give us reason to believe he would not *lie for God;* but speak neither more nor less than he felt: 2. If he gave a distinct account of the time and manner wherein the change was wrought, with sound speech which could not be reproved: and, 3. If it appeared that all his subsequent words and actions were holy and unblamable.

The short of the matter is this: 1. I have abundant reason to believe this person will not lie: 2. He testifies before God, "I feel no sin, but all love: I pray, rejoice, and give thanks without ceasing: and I have as clear an inward witness, that I am fully renewed, as that I am justified." Now if I have nothing to oppose to this plain testimony, I ought in reason to believe it.

It avails nothing to object, "But I know several things wherein he is quite mistaken." For it has been allowed, that all who are in the body are liable to mistake: and that a mistake in judgment may sometimes occasion a mistake in practice: (though great care is to be taken that no ill use be made of this concession.) For instance: even one that is perfected in love may mistake with regard to another person, and may think him, in a particular case, to be more or less faulty than he really is. And hence he may speak to him with more or less severity than the truth

requires. And in this sense, (though that be not the primary meaning of St. James,) "In many things we offend all." This therefore is no proof at all, that the person so speaking is not perfect in love.

Q. But is it not a proof, if he is *surprised* or *fluttered* by a noise, a fall, or some sudden danger?

A. It is not: for one may start, tremble, change colour, or be otherwise disordered in body, while the soul is calmly stayed on God, and remains in perfect peace. Nay, the mind itself may be deeply distressed, may be exceedingly sorrowful, may be perplexed and pressed down by heaviness and anguish, even to agony, while the heart cleaves to God by perfect love, and the will is wholly resigned to him. Was it not so with the Son of God himself? Does any child of man endure the distress, the anguish, the agony, which he sustained? And yet he *knew no sin.*

Q. But can any one who has a pure heart, prefer pleasing to unpleasing food? Or use any pleasure of sense which is not strictly necessary? If so, how do they differ from others?

A. The difference between these and others, in taking pleasant food is, 1. They need none of these things to make them happy; for they have a spring of happiness within. They see and love God: hence they rejoice evermore, and in every thing give thanks. 2. They may use them, but they do not seek them. 3. They use them sparingly, and not for the sake of the thing itself. This being premised, we answer directly: such a one may use pleasing food, without the danger which attends those who are not saved from sin. He may prefer it to unpleasing, though equally wholesome food, as a mean of increasing thankfulness, with a single eye to God, who giveth us all things richly to enjoy: on the same principle, he may smell to a flower, or eat a bunch of grapes, or take any other pleasure which does not lessen, but increase his delight in God. Therefore neither can we say, that one perfected in love would be incapable of marriage, and of worldly business: if he were called thereto, he would be more capable than ever; as being able

to do all things without hurry or carefulness, without any distraction of spirit.

Q. But what does the perfect Christian do more than others? More than the common believers?

A. Perhaps nothing; at least externally: so may the providence of God have hedged him in by outward circumstances. Perhaps not so much; though he desires and longs to spend and be spent for God: he neither speaks so many words, nor does so many works. As neither did our Lord himself speak so many words, or do so many, no, nor so great works, as some of his Apostles, (John xiv. 12.) But what then? This is no proof that he has not more grace: and by this God measures the outward work. Hear ye him: "Verily I say unto you, this poor widow has cast in more than them all." Verily this poor man, with his few broken words, has spoke more than them all. Verily this poor woman, that hath given a cup of cold water, hath done more than them all! O cease to *judge according to appearance*, and learn to *judge righteous judgment*.

Q. But is not this a proof against him? I feel no power either in his words or prayer?

A. It is not: for perhaps that is your own fault. You are not likely to feel any power therein, if any of these hindrances lie in the way: 1. Your own *deadness* of soul. The dead Pharisees felt *no power* even in his words, who "spake as never man spake:" 2. The guilt of some unrepented sin, lying upon the conscience: 3. *Prejudice* toward him of any kind. 4. Your *not believing* that state to be attainable, wherein he professes to be. 5. *Unwillingness* to think or own he has attained it. 6. Over-valuing or idolizing him. 7. Over-valuing yourself and your own judgment. If any of these be the case, what wonder is it that you feel no power in any thing he says? But do not others feel it? If they do, your argument falls to the ground. And if they do not, do none of these hindrances lie in their way too? Ye must be certain of this before you can build any argument thereon. And even then your argument will prove no more, than that grace and gifts do not always go together.

"But he does not come up to my idea of a perfect Christian." And perhaps no one ever did, or ever will. For your idea may go beyond, or at least beside the scriptural account. It may include more than the Bible includes therein, or however something which that does not include. Scripture perfection is, pure love filling the heart and governing all the words and actions. If your idea includes any thing more or any thing else, it is not scriptural; and then no wonder, that a scripturally-perfect Christian does not come up to it.

I fear many stumble on this stumbling-block. They include as many ingredients as they please, not according to Scripture, but their own imagination, in their idea of one that is perfect; and then readily deny any one to be such, who does not answer that imaginary idea.

The more care should we take, to keep the simple, scriptural account continually in our eye. Pure love reigning alone in the heart and life, this is the whole of scriptural perfection.

Q. When may a person judge himself to have attained this?

A. When after having been fully convinced of inbred sin, by a far deeper and clearer conviction, than he experienced before justification, and after having experienced a gradual mortification of it, he experiences a total death to sin, and an entire renewal in the love and image of God, so as to rejoice evermore, to pray without ceasing, and in every thing give thanks. Not that "to feel all love and no sin," is a sufficient proof; several have experienced this for a time, before their souls were fully renewed. None therefore ought to believe, that the work is done till there is added the testimony of the Spirit, witnessing his entire sanctification as clearly as his justification.

Q. But whence is it that some imagine they are thus sanctified, when in reality they are not?

A. It is hence: they do not judge by all the preceding marks, but either by part of them, or by others, that are ambiguous. But I know no instance of a person attending

to them all, and yet deceived in this matter. I believe there can be none in the world. If a man be deeply and fully convinced, after justification, of inbred sin; if he then experience a gradual mortification of sin, and afterwards an entire renewal in the image of God: if to this change immensely greater than that wrought when he was justified, be added a clear, direct witness of the renewal: I judge it as impossible this man should be deceived herein, as that God should lie. And if one whom I knew to be a man of veracity, testify these things to me, I ought not, without some sufficient reason, to reject his testimony.

Q. Is this death to sin, and renewal in love, gradual or instantaneous?

A. A man may be dying for some time; yet he does not, properly speaking, die till the instant the soul is separated from the body: and in that instant he lives the life of eternity. In like manner, he may be dying to sin for some time; yet he is not dead to sin, till sin is separated from his soul. And in that instant he lives the full life of love. And as the change undergone when the body dies, is of a different kind, and infinitely greater than any we had known before, yea, such as till then it is impossible to conceive; so the change wrought when he dies to sin, is of a different kind, and infinitely greater than any conceive till he experiences it. Yet he still grows in grace, in the knowledge of Christ, in the love and image of God: and will do so, not only till death, but to all eternity.

Q. How are we to wait for this change?

A. Not in careless indifference, or indolent inactivity; but in vigorous, universal obedience, in a zealous keeping of all the commandments, in watchfulness and painfulness, in denying ourselves, and taking up our cross daily; as well as in earnest prayer and fasting, and a close attendance on all the ordinances of God. And if any man dream of attaining it in any other way, (yea, or of keeping it when it is attained, when he has received it even in the largest measure,) he deceiveth his own soul. It is true we receive it by simple faith. But God does not, will not give that

faith, unless we seek it with all diligence, in the way which he hath ordained.

This consideration may satisfy those who inquire, Why so few have received this blessing? Inquire, how many are seeking it in this way? And you have a sufficient answer.

Prayer especially is wanting. Who continues instant therein? Who wrestles with God for this very thing? So ye have not because ye ask not; or because ye ask amiss, namely, "That you may be renewed before you die." Before you die! Will that content you? Nay, but ask that it may be done now! To-day! While it is called to-day! Do not call this, "setting God a time." Certainly to-day is his time as well as to-morrow. Make haste, man, make haste! Let

Thy soul break out in strong desire
The perfect bliss to prove!
Thy longing heart be all on fire
To be dissolv'd in love!

Q. But may we continue in peace and joy, till we are perfected in love?

A. Certainly we may, for the kingdom of God is not divided against itself. Therefore let not believers be discouraged from "rejoicing in the Lord always." And yet we may be sensibly pained at the sinful nature that still remains in us. It is good for us to have a piercing sense of this, and a vehement desire to be delivered from it. But this should only incite us, the more zealously to fly every moment to our strong Helper, the more earnestly to "press forward to the mark, the prize of our high calling in Christ Jesus." And when the sense of our sin most abounds, the sense of his love should much more abound.

Q. How should we treat those who think they have attained?

A. Examine them candidly, and exhort them to pray fervently, that God would shew them all that is in their hearts. The most earnest exhortations to abound in every grace, and the strongest cautions to avoid all evil, are given throughout the New Testament, to those who are in the

highest state of grace. But this should be done with the utmost tenderness, and without any harshness, sternness, or sourness. We should carefully avoid the very appearance of anger, unkindness, or contempt. Leave it to Satan thus to tempt, and to his children to cry out, "Let us examine him with despitefulness and torture, that we may know his meekness, and prove his patience." If they are faithful to the grace given, they are in no danger of perishing thereby: No, not if they remain in that mistake, till their spirit is returning to God.

Q. But what hurt can it do to deal harshly with them?

A. Either they are mistaken or they are not. If they are, it may destroy their souls. This is nothing impossible, no, nor improbable. It may so enrage, or so discourage them, that they may sink and rise no more. If they are not mistaken, it may grieve those whom God has not grieved, and do much hurt unto our own souls. For undoubtedly, he that toucheth them, toucheth, as it were, the apple of God's eye. If they are indeed full of his Spirit, to behave unkindly or contemptuously to them, is doing no little despite to the Spirit of Grace. Hereby likewise we feed and increase in ourselves evil-surmising, and many wrong tempers. To instance only one. What self-sufficiency is this, to set ourselves up for inquisitors general, for peremptory judges in the deep things of God! Are we qualified for the office? Can we pronounce in all cases, How far infirmity reaches? What may and what may not be resolved into it. What may in all circumstances, and what may not consist with perfect love? Can we precisely determine, How it will influence the look, the gesture, the tone of voice? If we can, doubtless "we are the men, and wisdom shall die with us!"

Q. But if they are displeased at our not believing them, is not this a full proof against them?

A. According as that displeasure is: if they are angry, it is a proof against them: if they are grieved, it is not. They ought to be grieved, if we disbelieve a real work of God, and thereby deprive ourselves of the advantage we might have received from it. And we may easily mistake

this grief for anger, as the outward expressions of both are much alike.

Q. But is it not well to find out those, who fancy they have attained, when they have not?

A. It is well to do it by mild, loving examination. But it is not well to triumph even over these. It is extremely wrong, if we find such an instance, to rejoice, as if we had found great spoils. Ought we not rather to grieve, to be deeply concerned, to let our eyes run down with tears? Here is one who seemed to be a living proof of God's power to save to the uttermost, but, alas! it is not as we hoped! He is weighed in the balance, and found wanting! And is this matter of joy? Ought we not to rejoice a thousand times more, if we can find nothing but pure love?

"But he is deceived." What then? It is a harmless mistake, while he feels nothing but love in his heart. It is a mistake which generally argues great grace, and a high degree both of holiness and happiness. This should be a matter of real joy to all that are simple of heart: not the mistake itself, but the height of grace which, for a time, occasions it. I rejoice that that soul is always happy in Christ, always full of prayer and thanksgiving. I rejoice that he feels no unholy temper, but the pure love of God continually. And I will rejoice, if sin is suspended, till it is totally destroyed.

Q. Is there no danger then in a man's being thus deceived?

A. Not at the time that he feels no sin. There was danger before, and there will be again, when he comes into fresh trials. But so long as he feels nothing but love, animating all his thoughts, and words, and actions, he is in no danger: he is not only happy, but safe, under the shadow of the Almighty. And, for God's sake, let him continue in that love as long as he can: mean time, you may do well to warn him of the danger that *will be*, if his love grow cold and sin revive, even the danger of casting away hope, and supposing, that because he hath not attained yet, therefore he never shall.

Q. But what if none have attained it yet? What if all who think so are deceived?

A. Convince me of this, and I will preach it no more. But understand me right: I do not build any doctrine on this or that person. This or any other man may be deceived, and I am not moved. But if there are none made perfect yet, God has not sent *me* to preach perfection.

Put a parallel case. For many years I have preached, "There is a peace of God which passeth all understanding." Convince me, that this word has fallen to the ground, that in all these years none have attained this peace, that there is no living witness of it at this day, and I will preach it no more.

"O, but several persons have died in that peace." Perhaps so: but I want living witnesses. I cannot indeed be infallibly certain, that this or that person is a witness. But if I were certain there were none such, I must have done with this doctrine.

"You misunderstand me. I believe some who died in his love, enjoyed it long before their death. But I was not certain, that their former testimony was true, till some hours before they died."

You had not an infallible certainty then. And a reasonable certainty you might have had before; such a certainty as might have quickened and comforted your own soul, and answered all other Christian purposes. Such a certainty as this any candid person may have, suppose there be any living witness, by talking one hour with that person in the love and fear of God.

Q. But what does it signify, whether any have attained it or not, seeing so many scriptures witness for it?

A. If I were convinced, that none in England had attained what has been so clearly and strongly preached by such a number of Preachers, in so many places, and for so long a time; I should be clearly convinced, that we had all mistaken the meaning of those scriptures, and therefore, for the time to come, I too must teach, that "sin will remain till death."

20. In the year 1762, there was a great increase of the work of God in London. Many, who had hitherto cared for none of these things, were deeply convinced of their lost estate. Many found redemption in the blood of Christ: not a few backsliders were healed. And a considerable number of persons believed, that God had saved them from *all sin*. Easily foreseeing, that Satan would be endeavouring to sow tares among the wheat, I took much pains to apprise them of the danger, particularly with regard to *pride* and *enthusiasm*. And while I stayed in Town, I had reason to hope they continued both humble and sober-minded. But almost as soon as I was gone, enthusiasm broke in. Two or three began to take their own imaginations for impressions from God, and thence to suppose that they should *never die*. And these labouring to bring others into the same opinion, occasioned much noise and confusion. Soon after, the same persons, with a few more, ran into other extravagancies, fancying they could not be tempted, that they should feel no more pain, and that they had the gift of prophecy, and of discerning of spirits. At my return to London in Autumn, some of them stood reproved: but others were got above instruction. Mean time a flood of reproach came upon *me* almost from every quarter; from themselves, because I was checking them on all occasions; and from others, "because" they said, "I did not check them." However, the hand of the Lord was not stayed, but more and more sinners were convinced; while others were almost daily converted to God; and others enabled to love him *with all their heart*.

21. About this time, a friend at some distance from London, wrote to me as follows:

"Be not over alarmed, that Satan sows tares among the wheat of Christ. It has ever been so, especially on any remarkable out-pouring of the Spirit; and ever will be so, till he is chained up for a thousand years. Till then he will always *ape*, and endeavour to *counteract* the work of the Spirit of Christ.

"One melancholy effect of this has been, that a world,

who is always asleep in the arms of the evil one, has ridiculed every work of the Holy Spirit.

"But what can real Christians do? Why, if they would act worthy of themselves, they should, 1. Pray that every deluded soul be delivered. 2. Endeavour to reclaim them in the spirit of meekness. And, Lastly, Take the utmost care, both by prayer and watchfulness, that the delusion of others may not lessen their zeal in seeking after that *universal holiness* of soul, body, and spirit, 'without which no man shall see the Lord.'

"Indeed, this *complete new creature* is mere madness to a mad world. But it is, notwithstanding, the *will* and *wisdom* of God. May we all seek after it!

"But some who maintain this doctrine in its full extent, are too often guilty of limiting the Almighty. He dispenses his gifts just as he pleases; therefore it is neither *wise* nor *modest* to affirm, That a person must be a believer for a length of time, before he is capable of receiving a *high degree* of the *Spirit of holiness*.

"God's *usual method* is one thing, but his *sovereign pleasure* is another. He has wise reasons both for hastening and retarding his work; sometimes he comes suddenly and unexpectedly; sometimes not till we have *long* looked for him.

"Indeed, it has been my opinion for many years, that one great cause why men make so little improvement in the divine life, is their own *coldness*, *negligence*, and *unbelief*. And yet I here speak of *believers*.

"May the Spirit of Christ give us a right judgment in all things, 'and fill us with all the fulness of God,' that so we may be 'perfect and entire, wanting nothing.'"

About the same time, five or six honest enthusiasts foretold the world was to end on the 28th of February. I immediately withstood them by every possible means, both in public and private. I preached expressly upon the subject, both at West-street and Spitalfields. I warned the Society again and again, and spoke severally to as many as I could: and I saw the fruit of my labour. They made exceedingly

few converts: I believe scarcely thirty in our whole Society. Nevertheless they made abundance of noise, gave huge occasion of offence to those who take care to improve to the uttermost every occasion against *me*, and greatly increased both in number and courage, those who opposed Christian Perfection.

22. Some questions, now published by one of these, induced a plain man to write the following *Queries*, humbly proposed to those who deny perfection to be attainable in this life.

1. Has there not been a larger measure of the Holy Spirit given under the Gospel, than under the Jewish Dispensation? If not, in what sense was *the Spirit not given* before Christ was *glorified?* John vii. 39.

2. Was that *glory which followed the sufferings of Christ*, 1 Pet. i. 11, an external glory, or an internal, viz. the glory of holiness?

3. Has God any where in Scripture commanded us more than he has promised to us?

4. Are the promises of God respecting holiness to be fulfilled in this life, or only in the next?

5. Is a Christian under any other laws than those which God promises to *write in our hearts?* Jer. xxxi. 31; Heb. viii. 10.

6. In what sense is "the righteousness of the law fulfilled in those who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit?" Rom. viii. 4.

7. Is it impossible for any one in this life, to "love God with all his heart, and mind, and soul, and strength?" And is the Christian under any law which is not fulfilled in this love?

8. Does the soul's going out of the body effect its purification from indwelling sin?

9. If so, is it not something else,—not "the blood of Christ, which cleanseth it from all sin?"

10. If his blood cleanseth us from all sin, while soul and body are united, is it not *in this life?*

11. If when that union ceases, is it not *in the next?* And is not this too late?

12. If in the article of death; what situation is the soul in, when it is neither *in the body*, nor *out of it?*

13. Has Christ any where taught us to pray for what he never designs to give?

14. Has he not taught us to pray, "Thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven?" And is it not done perfectly in heaven!

15. If so, has he not taught us to pray for *Perfection on earth?* Does he not then design to give it?

16. Did not St. Paul pray according to the will of God, when he prayed that the Thessalonians might be "sanctified wholly, and preserved" in this world, not the next, (unless he was praying for the dead,) "blameless in body, soul, and spirit, unto the coming of Jesus Christ?"

17. Do you sincerely desire to be freed from indwelling sin in this life?

18. If you do, did not God give you that desire?

19. If so, did he not give it you to mock you, since it is impossible it should ever be fulfilled?

20. If you have not sincerity enough even to desire it, are you not disputing about matters too high for you?

21. Do you ever pray God 'to cleanse the thoughts of your heart, that you may perfectly love him?'

22. If you neither desire what you ask, nor believe it attainable, pray you not as a fool prayeth?

God help thee to consider these questions calmly and impartially!

In the latter end of this year, God called to himself that burning and shining light, Jane Cooper. As she was both a living and dying witness of Christian Perfection, it will not be at all foreign to the subject to add a short account of her death, with one of her own letters, containing a plain and artless relation of the manner wherein it pleased God to work that great change in her soul.

"*May* 2, 1761.

"I believe, while memory remains in me, gratitude will continue. From the time you preached on Gal. v. 5, I saw clearly the true state of my soul. That sermon described my heart, and what it wanted, to be truly happy. You read Mr. M ****'s letter, and it described the religion which I desired. From that time the prize appeared in view, and I was enabled to follow hard after it. I was kept watching unto prayer, sometimes in much distress, at other times in patient expectation of the blessing. For some days before you left London, my soul was stayed on a promise I had applied to me in prayer, 'The Lord whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple.' I believed he would, and that he would sit there as a refiner's fire. The Tuesday after you went, I thought I could not sleep, unless he fulfilled his word that night. I never knew as I did then the force of these words, 'Be still and know that I am God!' I became nothing before him, and enjoyed perfect calmness in my soul. I knew not, whether he had destroyed my sin; but I desired to know, that I might praise him. Yet I soon found the return of unbelief, and groaned being burdened. On Wednesday I went to London, and sought the Lord without ceasing. I promised, if he would save me from sin, I would praise him. I could part with all things so I might win Christ. But I found all these pleas to be nothing worth, and that if he saved *me*, it must be freely, for his own Name's sake. On Thursday I was so much tempted, that I thought of destroying myself, or never conversing more with the people of God. And yet I had no doubt of his pardoning love: but ''Twas worse than death my God to love, and not my God alone.' On Friday my distress was deepened. I endeavoured to pray, and could not. I went to Mrs. D., who prayed for me, and told me it was the death of nature. I opened the Bible on, 'The fearful and unbelieving shall have their part in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone.' I could not bear it; I opened again on Mark xvi. 6, 7, 'Be not affrighted: ye seek Jesus of Nazareth;—Go your way;

tell his disciples he goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see him.' I was encouraged and enabled to pray, believing I should see Jesus at home. I returned that night, and found Mrs. G. She prayed for me; and the Predestinarian had no other plea, but 'Lord, thou art no respecter of persons.' He proved he was not, by blessing *me*. I was in a moment enabled to lay hold on Jesus, and found salvation by simple faith. He assured me, the Lord, the King, was in the midst of me, and that I should see evil no more. I now blessed him who had visited and redeemed me, and was become my 'wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.' I saw Jesus altogether lovely, and knew that he was mine in all his offices. And, glory be to him! He now reigns in my heart without a rival. I find no will but his. I feel no pride; nor any affection but what is placed on him. I know it is by faith I stand, and that watching unto prayer must be the guard of faith. I am happy in God this moment, and I believe for the next. I have often read the chapter you mention, (1 Cor. xiii.) and compared my heart and life with it. In so doing, I feel my short-comings, and the need I have of the atoning blood. Yet I dare not say, I do not feel a measure of the love there described, though I am not all I shall be. I desire to be lost in that love which passeth knowledge. I see the just shall live by faith; and unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given. If I were an archangel, I should veil my face before him, and let silence speak his praise!"

The following account is given by one who was an eye and ear witness of what she relates.

1. "In the beginning of November, she seemed to have a foresight of what was coming upon her, and used frequently to sing these words:

'When pain o'er this weak flesh prevails,
With lamb-like patience arm my breast.'

And when she sent to me, to let me know she was ill, she wrote in her note, I suffer the will of Jesus. All he sends is sweetened by his love. I am as happy as if I heard a voice say,

'For me my elder brethren stay,
And angels beckon me away,
And *Jesus* bids me come.'

2. "Upon my telling her, I cannot choose life or death for you, she said, 'I asked the Lord, that if it were his will, I might die first. And he told me, you should survive me, and that you should close my eyes.' When we perceived it was the small-pox, I said to her, My dear, you will not be frighted if I tell you what is your distemper. She said, 'I *cannot* be *frighted* at *his* will.'

3. "The distemper was soon very heavy upon her. But so much the more was her faith strengthened. Tuesday, Nov. 19, she said to me, 'I have been worshipping before the throne in a glorious manner, my soul was so let into God.' I said, Did the Lord give you any particular promise? 'No,' replied she, 'it was all,

'The sacred awe that dares not move,
And all the silent heaven of love.'

4. "On Thursday, upon my asking, What have you to say to me? She said, 'Nay, nothing but what you know already: God is love.' I asked, Have you any particular promise? She replied, 'I do not seem to want any, I can live without. I shall die a lump of deformity, but shall meet you all glorious. And meantime I shall still have fellowship with your spirit.'

5. "Mr. M. asked, what she thought the most excellent *way* to walk in, and what were its chief *hinderances?* She answered, "The greatest hinderance generally is from the natural constitution. It was mine, to be reserved, to be very quiet, to suffer much, and to say little. Some may think one *way* more excellent, and some another. But the thing is, to live in the will of God. For some months past, when I have been particularly devoted to this, I have felt such a guidance of the Spirit, and the unction which I have received from the Holy One, has so taught me all things, that I needed not any man should teach me, save as this anointing teacheth.'

6. "On Friday morning she said, 'I believe I shall die.' She then sat up in bed, and said, 'Lord, I bless thee, that thou art ever with me, and all thou hast is mine. Thy love is greater than my weakness, greater than my helplessness, greater than my unworthiness. And glory be to thee, O Jesus, thou art my brother. Let me comprehend with all saints, the length, and breadth, and depth, and heighth of thy love. Bless these, (some that were present): let them be every moment exercised in all things, as thou wouldest have them to be.'

7. "Some hours after, it seemed as if the agonies of death were just coming upon her. But her face was full of smiles of triumph, and she clapped her hands for joy. Mrs. C. said, 'My dear, you are more than conqueror, through the blood of the Lamb.' She answered, 'Yes, O yes: sweet Jesus! O death, where is thy sting?' She then lay as in a dose for some time. Afterwards she strove to speak, but could not. However, she testified her love by shaking hands with all in the room.

8. "Mr. W. then came. She said, 'Sir, I did not know that I should live to see you. But I am glad the Lord has given me this opportunity, and likewise power to speak to you. I love you. You have always preached the strictest doctrine; and I loved to follow it. Do so still, whoever is pleased or displeased.' He asked, 'Do you *now* believe you are saved from sin?' She said, 'Yes; I have had no doubt of it for many months. That I ever had, was because I didn't abide in the faith. I now feel, I have kept the faith; and perfect love casteth out all fear. As to you, the Lord promised me, your latter works should exceed your former, though I do not live to see it.—I have been a great *enthusiast* as they term it, these six months; but never lived so near the heart of Christ in my life. You, Sir, desire to comfort the hearts of hundreds, by following that simplicity your soul loves.'

9. "To one who had received the love of God under her prayer, she said, 'I feel I have not followed a cunningly devised fable; for I am as happy as I can live. Do you

press on, and stop not short of the mark.' To Miss M—s she said, 'Love Christ; he loves you. I believe I shall see you at the right hand of God.' But 'as one star differs from another star in glory, so shall it be in the resurrection.' I charge you in the presence of God, make me in that day all glorious within. Avoid all conformity to the world. You are robbed of many of your privileges. I know I shall be found blameless. Do you labour to be found of him in peace, without spot.'

10. "Saturday morning she prayed nearly as follows: 'I know, my Lord, my life is prolonged, only to do thy will. And though I should never eat or drink more, (she had not swallowed any thing for near eight and twenty hours), thy will be done. I am willing to be kept so a twelvemonth. 'Man liveth not by bread alone.' I praise thee that there is not a shadow of complaining in our streets. In that sense we know not what sickness means. Indeed, Lord, 'neither life, nor death, nor things present, nor things to come, no, nor any creature shall separate us from thy love one moment.' Bless these, that there may be no lack in their souls. I believe there shall not. I pray in faith.'

"On Sunday and Monday she was light-headed, but sensible at times. It then plainly appeared her heart was still in heaven. One said to her, 'Jesus is our mark.' She replied, 'I have but one mark, I am all spiritual.' Miss M. said to her, 'You dwell in God.' She answered, 'Altogether.' A person asked her, 'Do you love me?' She said, 'O, I love Christ: I love you Christ.' To another she said, 'I shall not long be here; Jesus is precious, very precious indeed.' She said to Miss M. 'The Lord is very good. He keeps my soul above all.' For fifteen hours before she died, she was in strong convulsions; her sufferings were extreme. One said, 'You are made perfect through sufferings.' She said, 'More and more so.' After lying quiet some time, she said, 'Lord, thou art strong.' Then pausing a considerable space, she uttered her last words, 'My Jesus is all in all to me: glory be to him through time and eternity.' After

this she lay still for about half an hour, and then expired without a sigh or groan."

25. The next year the number of those who believed they were saved from sin, still increasing, I judged it needful to publish, chiefly for their use, *Farther Thoughts on Christian Perfection.*

Q. 1. How is "Christ the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth?" Rom. x. 4.

A. In order to understand this, you must understand what law is here spoken of. And this I apprehend, is, 1. The Mosaic Dispensation; which St. Paul continually speaks of as one, though containing three parts, the political, moral, and ceremonial. 2. The Adamic law, that given to Adam in innocence, properly called, "the law of works." This is in substance the same with the Angelic Law, being common to angels and men. It required that man should use to the glory of God, all the powers with which he was created. Now he was created free from any defect, either in his understanding or his affections. His body was then no clog to the mind; it did not hinder his apprehending all things clearly, judging truly concerning them, and reasoning justly; if he reasoned at all. I say, "If he reasoned:" for possibly he did not. Perhaps he had no need of reasoning, till his corruptible body pressed down the mind, and impaired its native faculties. Perhaps, till then, the mind saw every truth that offered, as directly as the eye now sees the light.

Consequently this law, proportioned to his original powers, required that he should always think, always speak, and always act precisely right, in every point whatever. He was well able so to do. And God could not but require the service he was able to pay.

But Adam fell: and his incorruptible body became corruptible: and ever since it is a clog to the soul, and hinders its operations. Hence, at present no child of man can at all times apprehend clearly, or judge truly. And where either the judgment or apprehension is wrong, it is impossible to reason justly. Therefore it is as natural for a man

to mistake as to breathe; and he can no more live without the one than without the other. Consequently no man is able to perform the service which the Adamic law requires.

And no man is obliged to perform it: God does not require it of any man. "For Christ is the end of the Adamic, as well as the Mosaic law." By his death he hath put an end to both; he hath abolished both the one and the other with regard to man; and the obligation to observe either the one or the other is vanished away. Nor is any man living bound to observe the Adamic, more than the Mosaic law.

In the room of this, Christ hath established another, namely, The law of Faith. Not every one that doeth, but every one that believeth, now receiveth righteousness, in the full sense of the word; that is, he is justified, sanctified, and glorified.

Q. 2. Are we then dead *to the law?*

A. We "are dead to the law, by the body of Christ given for us," Rom. vii. 4. to the Adamic, as well as the Mosaic law. We are wholly freed therefrom by his death: that law expiring with him.

Q. 3. How then are we "not without law to God, but under the law to Christ?" 1 Cor. ix. 21.

A. We are without that law. But it does not follow that we are without any law. For God has established another law in its place, even the law of faith. And we are all under the law to God and to Christ. Both our Creator and our Redeemer require us to observe it.

Q. 4. Is love the fulfilling of this law?

A. Unquestionably it is. "The whole law, under which we now are, is fulfilled by love," Rom. xiii. 9, 10. Faith working or animating by love, is all that God now requires of man. He has substituted (not sincerity, but) love, in the room of Angelic perfection.

Q. 5. How is "love the end of the commandment?" 1 Tim. i. 4.

A. It is the end of every commandment of God. It is

the point aimed at by the whole, and every part of the christian institution. The foundation is faith, purifying the heart; the end love, preserving a good conscience.

Q. 6. What love is this?

A. The loving the Lord our God with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength: and the loving our neighbour, every man as ourselves, as our own souls.

Q. 7. What are the fruits or properties of this love?

A. St. Paul informs us at large, Love is long-suffering. It suffers all the wickedness of the children of the world. And that not for a little time only, but as long as God pleases. In all, it sees the hand of God, and willingly submits thereto. Mean time it is kind; in all, and after all it suffers, it is soft, mild, tender, benign. *Love envieth not:* It excludes every kind and degree of envy out of the heart. *Love acteth not rashly*, in a violent head-strong manner, nor passes any rash or severe judgment. It *doth not behave itself indecently*, is not rude, does not act out of character; *seeketh not her own* ease, pleasure, honour, or profit; *is not provoked;* expels all anger from the heart; *thinketh no evil;* casteth out all jealousy, suspiciousness, readiness to believe evil; *rejoiceth not in iniquity*, yea, weeps at the sin or folly of its bitterest enemies; *but rejoiceth in the truth*, in the holiness and happiness of every child of man. *Love covereth all things*, speaks evil of no man; *believeth all things*, that tend to the advantage of another's character. *It hopeth all things*, whatever may extenuate the faults which cannot be denied, and it *endureth all things*, which God can permit, or men and devils inflict. This is the law of Christ, the perfect law, the law of liberty.

And this distinction between the *law of faith*, (or love) and the *law of works*, is neither a *subtle*, nor an unnecessary distinction. It is plain, easy, and intelligible to any common understanding. And it is absolutely necessary, to prevent a thousand doubts and fears, even in those who do walk in love.

Q. 8. But do *we* not in many things offend all, yea, the best of us, even against this law?

A. In one sense we do not, while all our tempers, and thoughts, and words, and works, spring from love. But in another sense we do, and shall do, more or less, as long as we remain in the body. For neither love nor the unction of the Holy One makes us infallible. Therefore, through unavoidable defect of understanding, we cannot but mistake in many things. And these mistakes will frequently occasion something wrong, both in our temper, and words, and actions. From mistaking his character, we may love a person less than he really deserves. And by the same mistake we are unavoidably led to speak or act with regard to that person, in such a manner as is contrary to this law, in some or other of the preceding instances.

Q. 9. Do we not then need Christ, even on this account?

A. The holiest of men still need Christ, as their prophet, as the light of the world. For he does not give them light, but from moment to moment: the instant he withdraws, all is darkness. They still need Christ as their king. For God does not give them a stock of holiness. But unless they receive a supply every moment, nothing but unholiness would remain. They still need Christ as their priest to make atonement for their holy things. Even perfect holiness is acceptable to God only through Jesus Christ.

Q. 10. May not then the very best of men adopt the dying martyr's confession, "I am in myself nothing but sin, darkness, hell; but thou art my light, my holiness, my heaven?"

A. Not exactly. But the best of men may say, "Thou art my light, my holiness, my heaven. Through my union with thee, I am full of light, holiness, and of happiness. And if I were left to myself, I should be nothing but sin, darkness, hell."

But to proceed. The best of men need Christ as their priest, their atonement, their advocate with the Father, not only as the continuance of their every blessing depends on his death and intercession, but on account of their coming short of the law of love. For every man living does so. You who *feel all love*, compare yourselves with

the preceding description. Weigh yourselves in this balance, and see if you are not wanting in many particulars.

Q. 11. But if all this is consistent with Christian Perfection, that perfection is not freedom from all sin: seeing sin is the transgression of the law. And the perfect transgress the very law they are under. Besides, they need the atonement of Christ. And he is the atonement of nothing but sin. Is then the term *sinless perfection* proper?

A. It is not worth disputing about. But observe, in what sense, the persons in question need the atonement of Christ. They do not need him to reconcile them to God *afresh;* for they are reconciled. They do not need him to *restore* the favour of God, but to *continue* it. He does not procure pardon for them anew, but, "ever liveth to make intercession for them." And "by one offering, he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified," Heb. x. 24.

For want of duly considering this, some deny that they need the atonement of Christ. Indeed exceeding few; I do not remember to have found five of them in England. Of the two, I would sooner give up perfection. But we need not give up either one or the other. The perfection I hold, "Love rejoicing evermore, praying without ceasing, and in every thing giving thanks," is well consistent with it: if any hold a perfection which is not, they must look to it.

Q. 12. Does then Christian Perfection imply any more than *sincerity?*

A. Not if you mean by that word, love filling the heart, expelling pride, anger, desire, self-will; rejoicing evermore, praying without ceasing, and in every thing giving thanks. But I doubt few use *sincerity* in this sense. Therefore, I think the old word is best.

A person may be *sincere*, who has all his natural tempers, pride, anger, lust, self-will. But he is not *perfect* till his heart is cleansed from these, and all its other corruptions.

To clear this point a little farther: I know many that love God with all their heart. He is their one desire, their

one delight, and they are continually happy in him. They love their neighbour as themselves. They feel as sincere, fervent, constant a desire for the happiness of every man, good or bad, friend or enemy, as for their own. They rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and in every thing give thanks. Their souls are continually streaming up to God, in holy joy, prayer, and praise. This is a point of fact: and this is plain, sound, scriptural experience.

But even these souls dwell in a shattered body, and are so pressed down thereby, that they cannot always exert themselves as they would, by thinking, speaking, and acting *precisely right*. For want of better bodily organs, they must at times think, speak, or act wrong: not indeed through a defect of *love*, but through a defect of *knowledge*. And while this is the case, notwithstanding that defect and its consequences, they fulfil the law of love.

Yet as even in this case there is not a full conformity to the perfect law, so the most perfect do on this very account need the blood of atonement, and may properly for themselves, as well as for their brethren say, "Forgive us our trespasses."

Q. 13. But if Christ has put an end to that law, what need of any atonement for their transgressing it?

A. Observe in what sense he has *put an end* to it, and the difficulty vanishes. Were it not for the *abiding merit* of his death, and his *continual intercession* for us, that law would condemn us still. These therefore we still need, for every transgression of it.

Q. 14. But can one that is saved from sin be tempted?

A. Yes: for *Christ was tempted*.

Q. 15. However, what you call temptation I call the corruption of the heart. And how will you distinguish one from the other?

A. In some cases it is impossible to distinguish, without the *direct witness* of the Spirit. But in general one may distinguish thus:

One commends me. Here is a temptation to pride.

But instantly my soul is humbled before God. And I feel no pride; of which I am as sure, as that pride is not humility.

A man strikes me. Here is a temptation to anger. But my heart overflows with love. And I feel no anger at all: of which I can be as sure, as that love and anger are not the same.

A woman solicits me. Here is a temptation to lust. But in the instant I shrink back. And I feel no desire or lust at all: of which I am as sure, as that my hand is cold or hot.

Thus it is, if I am tempted by a *present* object: and it is just the same, if, when it is absent, the devil recalls a commendation, an injury, or a woman to my mind. In the instant the soul repels the temptation, and remains filled with pure love.

And the difference is still plainer, when I compare my present state with my past, wherein I felt temptation and corruption too.

Q. 16. But how do you *know* that you are sanctified, and saved from your inbred corruption?

A. I can know it no otherwise than I know that I am justified. Hereby know we that we are of God, in either sense, by the Spirit he hath given us.

We know it by *the witness*, and by *the fruit* of the Spirit. And first, by *the witness*. As when we were justified, the Spirit bore witness with our spirit, that our sins were forgiven, so when we were sanctified he bore witness that they were taken away. Indeed the witness of sanctification is not always clear at first; (as neither is that of justification); neither is it afterward always the same, but like that of justification, sometimes stronger and sometimes fainter. Yea, and sometimes it is withdrawn. Yet in general, the latter testimony of the Spirit is both as clear and as steady as the former.

Q. 17. But what need is there of it, seeing sanctification is a *real change*, not a *relative change* only, like justification?

A. But is the new-birth a *relative* change only? Is not this a *real* change? Therefore we need no witness of our sanctification, because it is a *real* change, for the same reason we should need none, that we are born of, or are the children of God.

Q. 18. But does not sanctification shine by its own light?

A. And does not the new birth too? Sometimes it does. And so does sanctification: at other times it does not. In the hour of temptation Satan clouds the work of God, and injects various doubts and reasonings, especially in those who have either very weak or very strong understandings. At such times there is absolute need of that witness: without which the work of sanctification, not only could not be discerned, but could no longer subsist. Were it not for this, the soul could not then abide in the love of God: much less could it rejoice evermore, and in every thing give thanks. In these circumstances, therefore, a *direct testimony* that we are sanctified, is necessary in the highest degree.

"But I have no *witness* that I am saved from sin: and yet I have no doubt of it." Very well. As long as you have no doubt, it is enough: when you have, you will need that witness.

Q. 19. But what scripture makes mention of any such thing, or gives any reason to expect it?

A. That scripture, 1 Cor. ii. 12, "We have received not the spirit that is of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we may know the things which are freely given us of God."

Now surely sanctification is one of "the things which are freely given us of God." And no possible reason can be assigned why this should be excepted, when the Apostle says, "We receive the Spirit for this very end, that we may know the things which are thus freely given us."

Is not the same thing implied in that well-known scripture, Rom. viii. 16, "The Spirit itself beareth witness with

our spirit, that we are the children of God?" Does he only bear witness to those who are children of God in the lowest sense? Nay, but to those also who are such in the highest sense. And does he not witness, that they are such in the highest sense? What reason have we to doubt it? What if a man were to affirm, (as indeed many do,) that this witness belongs *only to the highest* class of Christians? Would not you answer, The Apostle makes no restriction. Therefore doubtless it belongs to all the children of God. And will not the same answer hold, if any affirm, that it belongs *only to the lowest* class?

Consider likewise, 1 John v. 19, "We know that we are of God." How? "By the Spirit that he hath given us." Nay, "hereby we know that he abideth in us." And what ground have we, either from Scripture or Reason, to exclude the witness, any more than the fruit of the Spirit, from being here intended? By this then also we know that we are of God, and *in what sense* we are so; whether we are babes, young men, or fathers, we know in the same manner.

Not that I affirm, that all young men, or even fathers, have this testimony every moment. There may be intermissions of the direct testimony that they are thus born of God. But those intermissions are few and shorter as they grow up in Christ. And some have the testimony both of their justification and sanctification, without any intermission at all: which I presume more might have, did they walk humbly and closely with God.

Q. 20. May not some of them have a testimony from the Spirit, that they shall not finally fall from God?

A. They may. And this persuasion, that neither life nor death shall separate them from Him, far from being hurtful, may in some circumstances be extremely useful. These, therefore, we should in no wise grieve, but earnestly encourage them to hold the beginning of their confidence steadfast to the end.

Q. 21. But have any a testimony from the Spirit that they shall *never sin?*

A. We know not what God may vouchsafe to some particular persons. But we do not find any general state described in Scripture, from which a man cannot draw back to sin. If there were any state wherein this was impossible, it would be that of those who are sanctified, who are "Fathers in Christ, who rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and in every thing give thanks." But it is not impossible for these to draw back. They who are *sanctified*, yet may fall and perish, Heb. x. 29. Even Fathers in Christ need that warning, "Love not the world," 1 John ii. 15. They who rejoice, pray, and give thanks without ceasing, may nevertheless quench the Spirit, 1 Thes. v. 16, &c. Nay even those who are sealed unto the day of redemption, may yet grieve the Holy Spirit of God," Eph. v. 30.

Although therefore God may give such a witness to some particular persons, yet it is not to be expected by Christians in general, there being no scripture whereon to ground such an expectation.

Q. 22. By what fruit of the Spirit may we know that we are born of God even in the highest sense?

A. By *love*, *joy*, *peace* always abiding; by invariable *long-suffering*, patience, resignation; by *gentleness*, triumphing over all provocation; by *goodness*, mildness, sweetness, tenderness of spirit; by *fidelity*, simplicity, godly sincerity; by *meekness*, calmness, evenness of spirit; by *temperance*, not only in food and sleep, but in all things natural and spiritual.

Q. 23. But what great matter is there in this? Have we not all this when we are justified?

A. What! *Total resignation* to the Will of God, without any mixture of self-will? *Gentleness*, without any touch of anger, even the moment when we are provoked? *Love* to God, without the least love to the creature, but in and for God, excluding *all* envy, *all* jealousy, and rash judging? *Meekness*, keeping the whole soul inviolably calm? and temperance in all things? Deny that any ever

came up to this, if you please; but do not say all who are justified do.

Q. 24. But some who are newly justified do: What then will you say to these?

A. If they really do, I will say, they are sanctified, saved from sin in that moment: and that they never need lose what God has given, or feel sin any more.

But certainly this is an exempt case. It is otherwise with the generality of those that are justified: they feel in themselves more or less pride, anger, self-will, a heart bent to backsliding. And till they have gradually mortified these they are not fully renewed in love.

Q. 25. But is not this the case of all that are justified? Do they not *gradually* die to sin and grow in grace, till at, or perhaps a little before death, God perfects them in love?

A. I believe this is the case of most, but not all. God usually gives a considerable *time* for men to receive *light*, to grow in *grace*, to *do and suffer* his will, before they are either justified or sanctified. But he does not invariably adhere to this. Sometimes he *cuts short his work*. He does the work of many years in a few weeks: perhaps in a week, a day, an hour. He justifies or sanctifies both those who have *done* or *suffered* nothing, and who have not had *time* for a gradual growth either in *light* or *grace*. "And may he not do what he will with his own? Is thine eye evil because he is good?"

It need not therefore be affirmed over and over, and proved by forty texts of Scripture, either that most men are perfected in love *at last*, that there is a *gradual work* of God in the soul; or that, generally speaking, it is a *long time*, even many years before sin is destroyed. All this we know. But we know likewise, that God *may*, with man's good leave, *cut short his work* in whatever degree he pleases, and do the usual work of many years in a moment. He does so, in many instances. And yet there is a *gradual* work, both before and after that moment. So that one may

affirm, the work is *gradual*, another, it is *instantaneous*, without any manner of contradiction.

Q. 26. Does St. Paul mean any more by being sealed with the Spirit, than being renewed in love?

A. Perhaps in one place, 2 Cor. i. 22, he does not mean so much. But in another, Eph. i. 13, he seems to include both the fruit and the witness; and that in a higher degree than we experience, even when we are first renewed in love. God sealeth us with the Spirit of Promise, by giving us the full assurance of hope; such a confidence of receiving all the promises of God, as excludes the possibility of doubting; with that Holy Spirit, by universal holiness, stamping the whole image of God on our hearts.

Q. 27. But how can those, who are thus sealed, grieve the Holy Spirit of God?

A. St. Paul tells you very particularly: 1. By such conversation as is not profitable, not to the use of edifying, not apt to minister grace to the hearers. 2. By relapsing into bitterness or want of kindness. 3. By wrath, lasting displeasure, or want of tender-heartedness. 4. By anger, however soon it is over; want of instantly forgiving one another. 5. By clamour or brawling, loud, harsh, rough speaking. 6. By evil speaking, whispering, tale-bearing; needlessly mentioning the fault of an absent person, though in ever so soft a manner.

Q. 28. What do you think of those in London, who seem to have been lately renewed in Love?

A. There is something very peculiar in the experience of the greatest part of them. One would expect that a believer should first be filled with love, and thereby emptied of sin: whereas these were emptied of sin first, and then filled with love. Perhaps it pleased God to work in this manner, to make his work more plain and undeniable: and to distinguish it more clearly from that overflowing love, which is often felt even in a justified state.

It seems likewise most agreeable to the great promise, Ezek. xxxvi. 25, 26, "From all your filthiness I will

cleanse you; a new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you."

But I do not think of them all alike: there is a wide difference between some of them and others. I think most of them with whom I have spoken, have much faith, love, joy, and peace. Some of them I believe are renewed in love, and have the *direct witness* of it: and they manifest the *fruit* above described, in all their words and actions. Now let any man call this what he will: it is what I call *Perfection.*

But some who have much love, peace, and joy, yet have not the direct witness. The others who think they have, are nevertheless manifestly wanting in the fruit. How many I will not say: perhaps one in ten, perhaps more or fewer. But some are undeniably wanting in long-suffering and christian resignation. They do not see the hand of God in whatsoever occurs, and cheerfully embrace it. They do not in every thing give thanks, and rejoice evermore. They are not happy; at least not always happy. For sometimes they complain. They say, "This or that is *hard!*"

Some are wanting in *gentleness.* They resist evil, instead of turning the other cheek. They do not receive reproach with gentleness; no, nor even reproof. Nay, they are not able to bear contradiction, without the appearance, at least, of resentment. If they are reproved or contradicted, though mildly, they do not take it well. They behave with more distance and reserve than they did before. If they are reproved or contradicted harshly, they answer it with harshness; with a loud voice, or with an angry tone, or in a sharp and surly manner. They speak sharply or roughly when they reprove others, and behave roughly to their inferiors.

Some are wanting in *goodness.* They are not kind, mild, sweet, amiable, soft, and loving at all times, in their spirit, in their words, in their looks and air, in the whole tenor of their behaviour; and that to all, high and low,

rich and poor, without respect of persons: particularly to them that are out of the way, to opposers, and to those of their own household. They do not long study, or endeavour by every means to make all about them happy. They can see them uneasy, and not be concerned: perhaps they make them so; and then wipe their mouths and say, "Why, they deserve it: it is their own fault."

Some are wanting in *fidelity*, a nice regard to truth, simplicity, and godly sincerity. Their love is hardly *without dissimulation;* something like guile is found in their mouth. To avoid roughness, they lean to the other extreme. They are smooth to an excess, so as scarce to avoid a degree of fawning, or of seeming to mean what they do not.

Some are wanting in *meekness*, quietness of spirit, composure, evenness of temper. They are up and down, sometimes high, sometimes low: their mind is not well balanced. Their affections are either not in due proportion; they have too much of one, too little of another; or they are not duly mixed and tempered together, so as to counterpoise each other. Hence there is often a jar. Their soul is out of tune, and cannot make true harmony.

Some are wanting in *temperance*. They do not steadily use that kind and degree of food, which they know would most conduce to the health, strength, and vigour of the body. Or they are not temperate in sleep; they do not rigorously adhere to what is best both for body and mind. Otherwise they would constantly go to bed and rise early, and at a fixed hour. Or they sup late, which is neither good for body nor soul. Or they use neither fasting nor abstinence. Or they prefer, (which is so many sorts of intemperance,) that preaching, reading, or conversation which gives them transient joy and comfort, before that which brings godly sorrow, or instruction in righteousness. Such joy is not sanctified: it does not tend to and terminate in the crucifixion of the heart. Such faith does not centre in God, but rather in itself.

So far all is plain. I believe you have faith, and love, and joy, and peace. You who are particularly concerned,

know each for yourself, that you are wanting in the respects above-mentioned. You are wanting either in long-suffering, gentleness, or goodness; either in fidelity, meekness, or temperance. Let us not then, on either hand, fight about words. In the thing, we clearly agree.

You have not what I call perfection. If others will call it so, they may. However, hold fast what you have, and earnestly pray for what you have not.

Q. 29. Can those who are perfect grow in grace?

A. Undoubtedly they can. And that not only while they are in the body, but to all eternity.

Q. 30. Can they fall from it?

A. I am well assured they can. Matter of fact puts this beyond dispute. Formerly we thought one saved from sin could not fall. Now, we know the contrary. We are surrounded with instances of those, who lately experienced all that I mean by perfection. They had both the *fruit* of the Spirit and the *witness*. But they have now lost both. Neither does any one stand, by virtue of any thing that is implied in the *nature* of the state. There is no such *height* or *strength* of holiness as it is impossible to fall from. If there be any that *cannot fall*, this wholly depends on the promise and faithfulness of God.

Q. 31. Can those who fall from this state recover it?

A. Why not? We have many instances of this also. Nay, it is an exceeding common thing for persons to lose it more than once before they are established therein.

It is therefore to guard them who are saved from sin, from every occasion of stumbling, that I give the following advices. But first I shall speak plainly concerning the work itself.

I esteem this late work to be of God; probably the greatest now upon earth. Yet like all others, this also is mixed with much human frailty. But these weaknesses are far less than might have been expected; and ought to have been joyfully borne by all that loved and followed after righteousness. That there have been a few weak, warm-headed men, is no reproach to the work itself,

no just ground for accusing a multitude of sober-minded men, who are patterns of strict holiness. Yet (just contrary to what ought to have been) the opposition is great; the helps few. Hereby many are hindered from seeking faith and holiness by the false zeal of others: and some who at first began to run well, are turned out of the way.

Q. 32. What is the first advice that you would give them?

A. Watch and pray continually against pride. If God has cast it out, see that it enter no more: it is full as dangerous as desire. And you may slide back into it unawares: especially if you think there is no danger of it. "Nay, but I ascribe all I have to God." So you may, and be proud nevertheless. For it is pride, not only to ascribe any thing we have to ourselves, but to think we have what we really have not. Mr. L—, for instance, ascribed all that he had to God, and so far he was humble. But then he thought he had more light than any man living. And this was palpable pride. So you ascribe all the knowledge you have to God, and in this respect you are humble. But if you think you have more than you really have: or if you think you are so taught of God, as no longer to need man's teaching, pride lieth at the door. Yes, you have need to be taught, not only by Mr. M——n, by one another, by Mr. M——d, or me, but by the weakest preacher in London: yea, by all men. For God sendeth by whom he will send.

Do not therefore say to any who would advise or reprove you, "You are blind: you cannot teach me." Do not say, "This is your *wisdom*, your *carnal reason*:" but calmly weigh the thing before God.

Always remember, much grace does not imply much light. These do not always go together. As there may be much light where there is little love, so there may be much love where there is little light. The heart has more heat than the eye; yet it cannot see. And God has wisely tempered the members of the body together, that none may say to the other, "I have no need of thee."

To imagine none can teach you but those who are themselves saved from sin, is a very great and dangerous mistake. Give not place to it for a moment. It would lead you into a thousand other mistakes, and that irrevocably. No: Dominion is not founded upon grace, as the madmen of the last age talked. Obey and regard them that are over you in the Lord, and do not think you know better than they. Know their place, and *your own:* always remembering, much love does not imply much light.

The not observing this has led some into many mistakes, and into the appearance, at least of pride. O beware of the appearance, and the thing. Let there be in you that lowly mind, which was in Christ Jesus. And *be ye* likewise clothed with humility. Let it not only fill, but cover you all over. Let modesty and self-diffidence appear in all your words and actions. Let all you speak and do, shew that you are little, and base, and mean, and vile in your own eyes. As one instance of this, be always ready to own any fault you have been in. If you have at any time thought, spoke, or acted wrong, be not backward to acknowledge it. Never dream that this will hurt the cause of God; no, it will further it. Be therefore open and frank, when you are taxed with any thing: do not seek either to evade or disguise it. But let it appear just as it is, and you will thereby not hinder but adorn the Gospel.

Q. 33. What is the second advice which you would give them?

A. Beware of that daughter of pride, *enthusiasm?* O keep at the utmost distance from it: give no place to an heated imagination. Do not hastily ascribe things to God. Do not easily suppose dreams, voices, impressions, visions, or revelations to be from God. They may be from him. They may be from nature. They may be from the devil. Therefore "believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they be of God." Try all things by the written word, and let all bow down before it. You are in danger of enthusiasm every hour, if you depart ever so little from Scripture:

yea, or from the plain literal meaning of any text, taken in connexion with the context. And so you are, if you despise or lightly esteem reason, knowledge, or human learning: every one of which is an excellent gift of God, and may serve the noblest purposes.

I advise you never to use the words *wisdom*, *reason*, or *knowledge*, by way of reproach. On the contrary, pray that you yourself may abound in them more and more. If you mean *worldly* wisdom, *useless* knowledge, *false* reasoning, say so; and throw away the chaff, but not the wheat.

One general end of enthusiasm is, expecting the end without the means; the expecting knowledge, for instance, without searching the Scriptures, and consulting the children of God: the expecting spiritual strength without constant prayer, and steady watchfulness: the expecting any blessing without hearing the word of God at every opportunity.

Some have been ignorant of this device of Satan. They have left off searching the Scriptures. They said, "God writes all the Scripture on my heart: therefore, I have no need to read it." Others thought, they had not so much need of hearing, and so grew slack in attending the morning preaching. O take warning, you who are concerned herein. You have listened to the voice of a stranger. Fly back to Christ, and keep in the good old way, which was once delivered to the saints: the way that even a heathen bore testimony of, "That the Christians rose early every day to sing hymns to Christ as God."

The very desire of *growing in grace*, may sometimes be an inlet of enthusiasm. As it continually leads us to seek *new grace*, it may lead us unawares to seek something else new beside *new degrees* of love to God and man. So it has led some to seek and fancy they had received gifts of a *new kind*, after a new heart, as, 1. The loving God with all our mind. 2. With all our soul. 3. With all our strength. 4. Oneness with God. 5. Oneness with Christ. 6. Having

our life hid with Christ in God. 7. Being dead with Christ. 8. Rising with him. 9. The sitting with him in heavenly places. 10. The being taken up into his throne. 11. The being in the New Jerusalem. 12. The seeing the tabernacle of God come down among men. 13. The being dead to all works. 14. The not being liable to death, pain, or grief, or temptation.

One ground of many of these mistakes is, the taking every fresh strong application of any of these scriptures to the heart, to be a gift of a *new kind:* not knowing that several of these scriptures are not fulfilled yet; that most of the others are fulfilled when we are justified; the rest, the moment we are sanctified. It remains only, to experience them in *higher degrees.* This is all we have to expect.

Another ground of these, and a thousand mistakes, is, the not considering deeply that Love is the highest gift of God, humble, gentle, patient Love: that all visions, revelations, manifestations whatever, are little things compared with love: and that all the gifts above mentioned are either the same with, or infinitely inferior to it.

It were well you should be thoroughly sensible of this: the heaven of heavens is love. There is nothing higher in religion: there is, in effect, nothing else: if you look for any thing but *more love,* you are looking wide of the mark, you are getting out of the royal way. And when you are asking others, Have *you received* this or that blessing? if you mean any thing but *more love,* you mean wrong; you are leading them out of the way, and putting them upon a false scent. Settle it then in your heart, that from the moment God has saved you from all sin, you are to aim at nothing more, but more of that love described in the thirteenth of the Corinthians. You can go no higher than this, till you are carried into Abraham's bosom.

I say yet again, beware of *enthusiasm.* Such is the imagining you have the gift of *prophesying,* or of discerning of spirits, which I do not believe one of you has; no, nor ever had yet. Beware of judging people to be either

right or wrong, by your own *feelings*. This is no scriptural way of judging. O keep close to the law and the testimony!

Q. 34. What is the third?

A. Beware of Antinomianism, making void the law, or any part of it, through faith. Enthusiasm naturally leads to this: indeed they can scarce be separated. This may steal upon you in a thousand forms, so that you cannot be too watchful against it. Take heed of every thing, whether in principle or practice, which has any tendency thereto. Even that great truth, that Christ is the end of the law, may betray us into it, if we do not consider, that he has adopted every point of the moral law, and grafted it into the law of love. Beware of thinking, "Because I am filled with love, I need not have *so much* holiness: because I pray always, therefore I need no *set time* for private prayer: because I watch always, therefore I need no particular self-examination." Let us magnify the law, the whole written word, and make it honourable. Let this be our voice, "I prize thy commandments above gold or precious stones. O what love have I unto thy law. All the day long is my study in it!" Beware of Antinomian books; particularly of the works of Dr. Crisp, and Mr. Saltmarsh. They contain many excellent things; and this makes them the more dangerous. O be warned in time! Do not play with fire: do not put your hand on the hole of a cockatrice den! I entreat you, beware of *Bigotry*. Let not your love or beneficence be confined to Methodists (so called) only; much less to that very small part of them, who seemed to be renewed in love; or to those who believe your's and their report. O make not this your *Shibboleth*. Beware of stillness; ceasing in a wrong sense from your own works. To mention one instance out of many, "You have received," says one, "a great blessing. But you began to *talk* of it, and to *do* this and that. So you lost it. You should have been *still*."

Beware of self-indulgence; yea, and making a virtue of it, laughing at self-denial, and taking up the cross daily, at

fasting or abstinence. Beware of *censoriousness;* thinking or calling them that any ways oppose *you*, whether in judgment or practice, blind, dead, fallen, or "enemies to the work." Once more, beware of *Solifidianism;* crying nothing but "believe, believe:" and condemning those as *ignorant* or *legal* who speak in a more scriptural way. At certain seasons, indeed, it may be right to treat of nothing but repentance, or merely of faith, or altogether of holiness: but in general our call is to declare the whole counsel of God, and to prophesy, according to the analogy of faith. The written word treats of the whole, and every particular branch of righteousness, descending to its minutest branches, as to be sober, courteous, diligent, patient, to honour all men. So likewise the Holy Spirit works the same in our hearts, not merely creating desires after holiness in general, but strongly inclining us to every particular grace, leading us to every individual part of whatsoever is lovely. And this with the greatest propriety: for as by works faith is made perfect, so the completing or destroying the work of faith, and enjoying the favour or suffering the displeasure of God, greatly depends on every single act of obedience or disobedience.

Q. 35. What is the fourth?

A. Beware of *sins of omission:* lose no opportunity of doing good in any kind. Be zealous of good works: willingly omit no work, either of piety or mercy. Do all the good you possibly can to the bodies and souls of men. Particularly, "thou shalt in any wise reprove thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him." Be *active.* Give no place to indolence or sloth: give no occasion to say, "Ye are idle, ye are idle." Many will say so still; but let your whole spirit and behaviour refute their slander. Be always employed: lose no shred of time: gather up the fragments, that none be lost. And whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might. Be slow to speak, and wary in speaking. "In a multitude of words there wanteth not sin." Do not talk much: neither long at a time. Few can converse profitably for above an hour. Keep at the

utmost distance from pious chit-chat, from religious gossiping.

Q. 36. What is the fifth?

A. Beware of *desiring* any thing but God. Now you desire nothing else. Every other desire is driven out: see that none enter again. "Keep thyself pure:" "Let your eye remain single, and your whole body shall be full of light." Admit no desire of pleasing food, or any other pleasure of sense: no desire of pleasing the eye or the imagination, by any thing grand, or new, or beautiful: no desire of money, or praise, or esteem: of happiness in *any creature*. You may bring these desires back; but you *need* not: you need feel them no more. O stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free.

Be patterns to all, of denying yourselves, and taking up your cross daily. Let them see that you make no account of any pleasure which does not bring you nearer to God; nor regard any pain which does: that you simply aim at pleasing him, whether by doing or suffering: that the constant language of your heart, with regard to pleasure or pain, honour or dishonour, riches or poverty, is,

All's alike to me, so I
In my Lord may live and die!

Q. 37. What is the sixth?

A. Beware of *schism*, of making a rent in the church of Christ. That inward disunion, the members ceasing to have a reciprocal love one for another, (1 Cor. xii. 25,) is the very root of all contention, and every outward separation. Beware of any thing tending thereto. Beware of a dividing spirit: shun whatever has the least aspect that way. Therefore say not, "I am of Paul, or of Apollos;" the very thing which occasioned the schism at Corinth. Say not, "This is *my* preacher; the best preacher in England; give me him, and take all the rest." All this tends to breed or foment division, to disunite those whom God hath joined. Do not run down any preacher. Do not exalt any one above the rest, lest you hurt both him and the cause of God. On the other hand, do not bear

hard upon any by reason of some incoherency or inaccuracy of expression; no, nor for some mistakes, were they really such.

Likewise, if you would avoid schism, observe every *Rule* of the *Society*, and of the *Bands*, for conscience' sake. Never omit meeting your Class or Band: never absent yourself from any public meeting. These are the very sinews of our society; and whatever weakens, or tends to weaken, our regard for these, or our exactness in attending them, strikes at the very root of our community. As one saith, "that part of our economy, the private weekly meetings, for prayer, examination, and particular exhortation, has been the greatest means of deepening and confirming every blessing, that was received by the word preached, and of diffusing it to others, who could not attend the public ministry: whereas, without this religious connexion and intercourse, the most ardent attempts by mere preaching, have proved of no lasting use."

Suffer not one thought of separating from your brethren, whether their opinions agree with your's or not. Do not dream, that any man sins in not believing *you*, in not taking *your word:* or that this or that *opinion* is essential to the work, and both must stand or fall together. Beware of impatience of contradiction. Do not condemn or think hardly of those who cannot see just as you see, or who judge it their duty to contradict you, whether in a great thing or a small. I fear some of us have thought hardly of others, merely because they contradicted what we affirmed. All this tends to division. And by every thing of this kind we are teaching them an evil lesson against ourselves.

O beware of touchiness, or testiness; not bearing to be spoken to: starting at the least word; and flying from those who do not implicitly receive mine or another's sayings!

Expect contradiction and opposition, together with crosses of various kinds. Consider the words of St. Paul, "To you it is given in the behalf of Christ," for his sake, as a fruit of his death and intercession for you, "not only to

believe, but also to suffer for his sake," Phil. i. 19. "It is given!" God gives you this opposition or reproach: it is a fresh token of his love. And will you disown the Giver? Or spurn the gift, and count it a misfortune? Will you not rather say, "Father, the hour is come that thou shouldst be glorified. Now thou givest thy child to suffer something for thee. Do with me according to thy will." Know that these things, far from being hindrances to the work of God, or to your soul, unless by your own fault, are not only unavoidable in the course of Providence, but profitable, yea, necessary for you. Therefore receive them from God, (not from chance,) with willingness, with thankfulness. Receive them from men with humility, meekness, yieldingness, gentleness, sweetness. Why should not even your outward *appearance* and *manner* be soft? Remember the character of Lady Cutts: "It was said of the Roman Emperor, Titus, never any one came displeased from him. But it might be said of her, never any one went displeased to her. So secure were all, of the kind and favourable reception which they would meet with from her."

Beware of tempting others to separate from *you*. Give no offence which can possibly be avoided: see that your practice be in all things suitable to your profession, adorning the doctrine of God our Saviour. Be particularly careful in speaking of yourself: You may not indeed deny the work of God: but speak of it, when you are called thereto, in the most inoffensive manner possible. Avoid all magnificent, pompous words. Indeed you need give it no general name. Neither "perfection, sanctification, the second blessing, nor the having attained." Rather speak of the particulars which God has wrought for you. You may say, "At such a time I felt a change which I am not able to express. And since that time I have not felt pride, or self-will, or anger, or unbelief: nor any thing but a fulness of love to God and to all mankind." And answer any other plain question that is asked, with modesty and simplicity.

And if any of you should at any time fall from what you now are: if you should again feel pride, or unbelief, or any

temper from which you are now delivered; do not deny, do not hide, do not disguise it at all, at the peril of your soul. At all events, go to one in whom you can confide, and speak just what you feel. God will enable him to speak a word in season, which shall be health to your soul. And surely he will again lift up your head, and cause the bones that have been broken to rejoice.

Q. 38. What is the last advice that you would give them?

A. Be exemplary in all things: particularly in outward things, (as in *dress*,) in little things, in the laying out of your money, (avoiding every needless expense,) in deep, steady seriousness, and in the solidity and usefulness of all your conversation. So shall you be a light shining in a dark place. So shall you daily "grow in grace, till an entrance be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Most of the preceding advices are strongly enforced in the following reflections: which I recommend to your deep and frequent consideration, next to the holy Scriptures.

1. The sea is an excellent figure of the fulness of God, and that of the blessed Spirit. For as the rivers all return to the sea; so the bodies, the souls, and the good works of the righteous, return to God, to live there in his eternal repose.

Although the graces of God depend upon his mere bounty, yet is he pleased generally to attach them to the prayers, the instructions, and the holiness of those with whom we are. By strong, though invisible attraction, he draws some souls through their intercourse with others.

The sympathies formed by grace far surpass those formed by nature.

The truly devout shew, that passions as naturally flow from true, as from false love, so deeply sensible are they of the good and evil of those whom they love for God's sake. But this can only be comprehended by those who understand the language of love.

The bottom of the soul may be in repose, even while we

are in many outward troubles: just as the bottom of the sea is calm, while the surface is strongly agitated.

The best helps to grow in grace are the ill usage, the affronts, and the losses which befall us. We should receive them with all thankfulness, as preferable to all others, were it only on this account, that our will has no part therein.

The readiest way to escape from our sufferings is, to be willing they should endure as long as God pleases.

If we suffer persecution and affliction in a right manner, we attain a larger measure of conformity to Christ, by a due improvement of one of these occasions, than we could have done merely by imitating his mercy, in abundance of good works.

One of the greatest evidences of God's love to those that love him, is to send them afflictions with grace to bear them.

Even in the greatest afflictions we ought to testify to God, that in receiving them from his hand, we feel pleasure in the midst of the pain, from being afflicted by him who loves us, and whom we love.

The readiest way which God takes to draw a man to himself, is to afflict him in that he loves most, and with good reason; and to cause this affliction to arise from some good action done with a single eye: because nothing can more clearly shew him the emptiness of what is most lovely and desirable in the world.

2. True *Resignation* consists in a thorough conformity to the whole will of God; who wills and does all (excepting sin) which comes to pass in the world. In order to this we have only to embrace all events, good and bad, as his will.

In the greatest afflictions that can befall the just, either from heaven or earth, they remain immovable in peace, and perfectly submissive to God, by an inward, loving regard to him, uniting in one all the powers of their souls.

We ought quietly to suffer whatever befalls us: to bear the defects of others, and our own, to confess them to God in secret prayer, or with groans which cannot be uttered:

but never to speak a sharp or peevish word, nor to murmur or repine.

But be thoroughly willing, that God should treat you in the manner that pleases him. We are his lambs, and therefore ought to be ready to suffer, even to the death, without complaining.

We are to bear with those we cannot amend, and to be content with offering them to God. This is true resignation. And since he has borne our infirmities, we may well bear those of each other for his sake.

To abandon all, to strip one's self of all, in order to seek and to follow Jesus Christ, naked to Bethlehem, where he was born; naked to the hall, where he was scourged; and naked to Calvary, where he died on the cross, is so great a mercy, that neither the thing, nor the knowledge of it, is given to any, but through faith in the Son of God.

3. There is no love of God without patience, and no patience without *Lowliness* and sweetness of spirit.

Humility and patience are the surest proofs of the increase of love.

Humility alone unites patience with love, without which it is impossible to draw profit from suffering; or indeed to avoid complaint, especially when we think we have given no occasion for what men make us suffer.

True humility is a kind of self-annihilation; and this is the centre of all virtues.

A soul returning to God, ought to be attentive to every thing which is said to him on the head of salvation, with a desire to profit thereby.

Of the sins which God has pardoned, let nothing remain but a deeper humility in the heart, and a stricter regulation in our words, in our actions, and in our sufferings.

4. The bearing afflictions, and suffering evils in *Meekness* and silence, is the sum of a Christian's life.

God is the first object of our love: its next office is, to bear with the defects of others, and we should begin the practice of this amidst our own household.

We should chiefly exercise our love towards them who

most shock either our way of thinking, or our temper, or our knowledge, or the desire we have that others should be as virtuous as we wish to be ourselves.

5. God only gives his Spirit even to those whom he has established in grace, if they do not pray for it on all occasions, not only once, but many times.

God does nothing but in answer to prayer; and even they who have been converted to God, without praying for it themselves, (which is exceedingly rare,) were not without the prayers of others. Every new victory which a soul gains, is the effect of a new prayer.

On every occasion of uneasiness we should retire to prayer, that we may give place to the grace and light of God, and then form our resolutions, without being in any pain about what success they may have.

In the greatest temptations, a single look to Christ, and the barely pronouncing his name, suffices to overcome the wicked one, so it be done with confidence and calmness of spirit.

God's command, to pray without ceasing, is founded on the necessity we have of his grace, to preserve the life of God in the soul, which can no more subsist one moment without it, than the body can without air.

Whether we think of or speak to God, whether we act or suffer for him, all is prayer, when we have no other object than his love, and the desire of pleasing him.

All that a Christian does, even in eating and sleeping, is prayer, when it is done in simplicity, according to the order of God, without either adding to, or diminishing from it by his own choice.

Prayer continues in the desire of the heart, though the understanding be employed on outward things.

In souls filled with love, the desire to please God is a continual prayer.

As the furious hate which the devil bears us is termed the roaring of the lion, so our vehement love may be termed, crying after God.

God only requires of his adult children, that their hearts

be truly purified, and that they offer him continually the wishes and vows that naturally spring from perfect love. For these desires being the genuine fruits of love, are the most perfect prayers that can spring from it.

6. It is scarcely conceivable how *strait the way* is wherein God leads them that follow him: and how dependent on him we must be, unless we are wanting in our faithfulness to him.

It is hardly credible of how great consequence before God the smallest things are; and what great inconveniences sometimes follow those which appear to be light faults.

As a very little dust will disorder a clock, and the least grain of sand will obscure our sight, so the least grain of sin, which is upon the heart, will hinder its right motion towards God.

We ought to be in the church as the saints are in heaven, and in the house as the holiest men are in the church: doing our work in the house, as we pray in the church, worshipping God from the ground of the heart.

We should be continually labouring to cut off all the useless things that surround us. And God usually retrenches the superfluities of our souls in the same proportion as we do those of our bodies.

The best means of resisting the devil is, to destroy whatever of the world remains in us, in order to raise for God upon its ruins a building all of love. Then shall we begin in this fleeting life to love God as we shall love him in eternity.

We scarcely conceive how easy it is to rob God of his due, in our friendship with the most virtuous persons, until they are torn from us by death. But if this loss produce lasting sorrow, that is a clear proof that we had before two treasures between which we divided our heart.

7. If after having renounced all, we do not *watch* incessantly, and beseech God to accompany our vigilance with his, we shall be again entangled and overcome.

As the most dangerous winds may enter at little openings,

so the devil never enters more dangerously than by little unobserved incidents, which seem to be nothing, yet insensibly open the heart to great temptations.

It is good to renew ourselves from time to time, by *closely examining* the state of our souls, as if we had never done it before. For nothing tends more to the full assurance of faith, than to keep ourselves by this means in humility, and the exercise of all good works.

To continual watchfulness and prayer, ought to be added continual employment. For grace flies a vacuum as well as nature, and the devil fills whatever God does not fill.

There is no faithfulness like that, which ought to be between a guide of souls, and the person directed by him. They ought continually to regard each other, in God, and closely to examine themselves, whether all their thoughts are pure, and all their words directed with Christian discretion.—Other affairs are only the things of men; but these are peculiarly the things of God.

8. The words of St. Paul, "No man can call Jesus, Lord, but by the Holy Ghost," shew us the necessity of eyeing God in our *good works*, and even in our minutest thoughts; knowing that none are pleasing to him, but those which he forms in us and with us. From hence we learn, that we cannot serve him, unless he use our tongue, hands, and heart, to do by his Spirit whatever he would have us to do.

If we were not utterly impotent, our good works would be our own property: whereas now they belong wholly to God, because they proceed from him and his grace; while raising our works, and making them all divine, he honours himself in us through them.

One of the principal rules of religion is, To lose no occasion of serving God. And since he is invisible to our eyes, we are to serve him in our neighbour; which he receives as if done to himself in person, standing visibly before us.

God does not love men that are inconstant, nor the good works that are intermitted. Nothing is pleasing

to him, but what has a resemblance of his own immutability.

A constant attention to the work which God entrusts us with, is a mark of solid piety.

Love fasts when it can, and as much as it can. It leads to all the ordinances of God, and employs itself in all the outward works whereof it is capable. It flies, as it were, like Elijah over the plain, to find God upon his holy mountain.

God is so great that he communicates greatness to the least thing that is done for his service.

Happy are they who are sick; yea, or who lose their life for having done a good work.

God frequently conceals the part which his children have in the conversion of other souls. Yet one may boldly say, that a person who long groans before him for the conversion of another, whenever that soul is converted to God, is one of the chief causes of it.

Charity cannot be practised right, unless, first, we exercise it the moment God gives the occasion; and, secondly, retire the instant after, to offer it to God by humble thanksgiving. And this for three reasons. 1. To render him what we have received from him. 2. To avoid the dangerous temptation, which springs from the very goodness of these works. 3. To unite ourselves to God, in whom the soul expands itself in prayer, with all the graces we have received, and the good works we have done, to draw from him new strength against the bad effects which these very works may produce in us, if we do not make use of the antidotes which God has ordained against these poisons. The true means to be filled anew with the riches of grace, is thus to strip ourselves of it; and without this, it is extremely difficult not to grow faint in the practice of good works.

Good works do not receive their last perfection, till they, as it were, lose themselves in God. This is a kind of death to them, resembling that of our bodies, which will not attain their highest life, their immortality, till they lose

themselves in the glory of our souls, or rather of God, wherewith they shall be filled. And it is only what they had of earthly and mortal, which good works lose by this spiritual death.

Fire is the symbol of love; and the love of God is the principle and the end of all our good works. But as truth surpasses figure, the fire of divine love has this advantage over material fire, that it can re-ascend to its source, and raise thither with it all the good works which it produces. And by this means it prevents their being corrupted by pride, vanity, or any evil mixture. But this cannot be done, otherwise than by making these good works in a spiritual manner, die in God, by deep gratitude, which plunges the soul in him as in an abyss, with all that it is, and all the grace and works for which it is indebted to him: a gratitude whereby the soul seems to empty itself of them, that they may return to their source, as rivers seem willing to empty themselves, when they pour themselves with all their waters into the sea.

When we have received any favour from God, we ought to retire, if not into our closets, into our hearts, and say, "I come, Lord, to restore to thee what thou hast given, and I freely relinquish it, to enter again into my own nothingness. For what is the most perfect creature in heaven or earth in thy presence, but a void capable of being filled with thee and by thee, as the air which is void and dark, is capable of being filled with the light of the sun, who withdraws it every day to restore it the next, there being nothing in the air that either appropriates this light, or resists it. O give me the same felicity of receiving and restoring thy grace and good works! I say thine: for I acknowledge the root from which they spring is in thee, and not in me."

26. In the year 1764, upon a review of the whole subject, I wrote down the sum of what I had observed, in the following short propositions:—

"1. There is such a thing as *Perfection;* for it is again and again mentioned in Scripture.

2. It is not so early as justification; for justified persons are to go on to perfection, Heb. vi. 1.

3. It is not so late as death; for St. Paul speaks of living men that were perfect, Phil. iii. 15.

4. It is not *absolute*. Absolute perfection belongs not to man; nor to angels; but to God alone.

5. It does not make a man *infallible*; none is infallible, while he remains in the body.

6. Is it *sinless*? It is not worth while to contend for a term. It is salvation from sin.

7. It is perfect love, 1 John iv. 18. This is the *essence* of it: its properties, or inseparable fruits, are, "rejoicing evermore, praying without ceasing, and in every thing giving thanks," 1 Thes. v. 16, &c.

8. It is *improvable*. It is so far from lying in an indivisible point, from being incapable of increase, that one perfected in love may grow in grace far swifter than he did before.

9. It is capable of being lost; of which we have numerous instances. But we were not thoroughly convinced of this, till five or six years ago.

10. It is constantly both preceded and followed by a *gradual* work.

11. But is it in itself instantaneous, or not? In examining this, let us go on step by step.

An *instantaneous change* has been wrought in some believers: none can deny this.

Since that change, they enjoy *perfect love*. They rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and in every thing give thanks. Now this is all that I mean by perfection. Therefore, these are witnesses of the perfection which I preach.

"But in some this change was not instantaneous." They did not perceive the instant when it was wrought. It is often difficult to perceive the instant when a man dies. Yet there is an instant in which life ceases. And if even sin ceases, there must be a last moment of its existence, and a first moment of our deliverance from it.

"But if they have this love now, they will lose it."

They may; but they need not. And whether they do or not, they have it now; they now experience what we teach. They now are *all love*. They *now* rejoice, pray, and praise without ceasing.

"However, sin is only *suspended* in them; it is not *destroyed*." *Call* it which you please. They are *all love* today; and they take no thought for the morrow.

"But this doctrine has been much abused." So has that of justification by faith. But that is no reason for giving up, either this or any other Scriptural Doctrine. "When you wash your child, (as one speaks) throw away the water, but do not throw away the child."

"But those who think they are saved from sin, say, they have no need of the merits of Christ." They say just the contrary. Their language is,

Every moment, Lord, I want,
The merit of thy death!

They never before had so deep, so unspeakable a conviction of the need of Christ in all his offices, as they have now.

Therefore all our Preachers should make a point of *preaching perfection* to believers, constantly, strongly, and explicitly.

And all believers should mind this one thing, and continually agonize for it.

27. I have now done what I proposed. I have given a plain and simple account of the manner wherein I first received the Doctrine of Perfection, and the sense wherein I received, and wherein I do receive and teach it to this day. I have declared the whole, and every part of what I mean by that Scriptural Expression. I have drawn the picture of it at full length, without either disguise or covering. And I would now ask any impartial person, What is there so frightful therein? Whence is all this outcry, which, for these twenty years and upwards, has been made throughout the kingdom, as if all Christianity were destroyed, and all religion torn up by the root? Why is it, that the very name of *perfection* has been cast out of

the mouths of Christians; yea, exploded and abhorred, as if it contained the most pernicious heresy? Why have the Preachers of it been hooted at like mad dogs, even by men that fear God: nay, and by some of their own children; some whom they, under God, had begotten through the gospel? What *reason* is there for this? Or what *pretence?* Reason, sound reason there is none. It is impossible there should: but *pretences* there are, and those in great abundance. Indeed there is ground to fear, that with some who treat us thus, it is a mere pretence; that it is no more than a copy of their countenance, from the beginning to the end. They wanted, they sought occasion against *me:* and here they found what they sought. "This is Mr. Wesley's doctrine! he preaches perfection." He does: yet this is not *his* doctrine, any more than it is *yours;* or any one's else that is a Minister of Christ. For it is *his* doctrine, particularly emphatically His; it is the doctrine of Jesus Christ. Those are *his* words, not mine, Εσεσθε ουν τελειοι, ωσπερ ο Πατηρ υμων ω εν τοις ουρανοις τελειος εστι. "Ye shall, therefore, be perfect, as your Father who is in heaven is perfect." And who says, ye shall not? Or at least, not till your soul is separated from the body? It is the doctrine of St. Paul, the doctrine of St. James, of St. Peter, St. John: and no otherwise Mr. Wesley's, than as it is the doctrine of every one who preaches the pure and the whole gospel. I tell you, as plain as I can speak, where and when I found this. I found it in the Oracles of God, in the Old and New Testament, when I read them with no other view or desire but to save my own soul. But whosesoever this doctrine is, I pray you, what harm is there in it? Look at it again: survey it on every side, and that with the closest attention. In one view, it is purity of intention, dedicating all the life to God. It is the giving God all our heart; it is one desire and design ruling all our tempers. It is the devoting not a part, but all our soul, body, and substance to God. In another view, it is all the mind which was in Christ, enabling us to walk as Christ walked. It is the circumcision of the heart from all

filthiness; all inward as well as outward pollution. It is a renewal of the heart in the whole image of God, the full likeness of him that created it. Yet in another, it is the loving God with all our heart, and our neighbour as ourselves. Now take in which of these views you please, (for there is no material difference,) and this is the whole and sole perfection, as a train of writings prove to a demonstration, which I have believed and taught for these forty years, from the year 1725 to the year 1765.

28. Now let this *perfection* appear in its native form, and who can speak one word against it? Will any dare to speak against loving the Lord our God with all our heart, and our neighbour as ourselves? Against a renewal of heart, not only in part, but in the whole image of God? Who is he that will open his mouth against being cleansed from all pollution both of flesh and spirit? Or against having all the mind that was in Christ, and walking in all things as Christ walked? What man who calls himself a Christian, has the hardiness to object to the devoting, not a part, but all our soul, body, and substance to God: What serious man would oppose the giving God all our heart, and the having one design ruling all our tempers? I say again, let this perfection appear in its own shape, and who will fight against it? It must be *disguised* before it can be *opposed*. It must be *covered* with a bear-skin first, or even the wild beasts of the people will scarce be induced to *worry* it.

But whatever these do, let not the children of God any longer fight against the image of God. Let not the members of Christ say any thing against having the whole mind that was in Christ. Let not those who are alive to God oppose the dedicating all our life to him. Why should you, who have his love shed abroad in your heart, withstand the giving him all your heart? Does not all that is within you cry out, "O who that loves, can love enough?" What pity that those who desire or design to please him, should have any other design or desire? much more that they should dread, as a fatal delusion, yea, abhor, as an abomination

to God, the having this one desire and design, ruling every temper? Why should *devout* men be afraid of devoting all their soul, body, and substance to God? Why should those who love Christ, count it a damnable error, to think we may have all the mind that was in him? We allow, we contend, that we are *justified freely*, through the righteousness and blood of Christ. And why are you so hot against us, because we expect to be *sanctified wholly* through his Spirit? We look for no favour either from the open servants of sin, or from those who have only the form of religion. But how long will you, who worship God in spirit, who are circumcised with the circumcision not made with hands, set your battle in array against those who seek an entire circumcision of heart, who thirst to be cleansed from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, and to perfect holiness in the fear of God? Are we your enemies, because we look for a full deliverance from the carnal mind, which is enmity against God? Nay, we are your brethren, your fellow-labourers in the vineyard of our Lord, your companions in the kingdom and patience of Jesus. Although this we confess, (if we are fools therein, yet as fools bear with us,) we do expect to love God with all our heart, and our neighbour as ourselves. Yea, we do believe, that he will in this world so "cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of his Holy Spirit, that we shall perfectly love him, and worthily magnify his holy name."

AN

ADDRESS

TO THE

CLERGY.

BRETHREN AND FATHERS,

LET it not be imputed to forwardness, vanity, or presumption, that one who is of little esteem in the church, takes upon him thus to address a body of people, to many of whom he owes the highest reverence. I owe a still higher regard to him who I believe requires this at my hands; to the great BISHOP of our souls; before whom both you and I must shortly give an account of our stewardship. It is a debt I owe to love, to real, disinterested affection, to declare what has long been the burden of my soul. And may the GOD of LOVE enable you to read these lines in the same spirit wherewith they were written! It will easily appear to an unprejudiced reader, that I do not speak from a spirit of anger or resentment. I know well, "the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God." Much less would I utter one word out of *contempt;* a spirit justly abhorred by God and man. Neither of these can consist with that earnest, tender love, which is the motive of my present undertaking. In this spirit I desire to *cast* my *bread upon the waters;* it is enough, if I *find it again after many days.*

Meantime you are sensible, love does not forbid, but rather require plainness of speech. Has it not often constrained you as well as me, to lay aside, not only disguise, but reserve also? And "by manifestation of the truth to commend ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God?" And while I endeavour to do this, let me earn-

estly entreat you for the love of God, for the love of your own soul, for the love of the souls committed to your charge, yea, and of the whole church of *Christ*, do not bias your mind, by thinking *who* it is that speaks; but impartially consider, *what* is spoken. And if it be false or foolish, reject it: but do not reject *the words of truth and soberness.*

My first design was, to offer a few plain thoughts to the Clergy of our own church only. But upon farther reflection, I see no cause for being so *straitened in my own bowels.* I am a debtor to all: and, therefore, though I primarily speak to them with whom I am more immediately connected, yet I would not be understood to exclude any, of whatsoever denomination, whom God has called to *watch over the souls of others, as they that must give account.*

In order to our giving this account with joy, are there not two things which it highly imports us to consider, *First,* What manner of men ought we to be? *Secondly,* Are we such, or are we not?

I. And, *First,* If we are "Overseers over the church of God, which he hath bought with his own blood," what manner of men ought we to be, in *Gifts* as well as in *Grace?*

To begin with *Gifts,* and, 1. with those that are from *nature.* Ought not a minister to have, 1st, A good understanding? A clear apprehension, a sound judgment, and a capacity of reasoning with some closeness? Is not this necessary in a high degree for the work of the ministry? Otherwise how will he be able to understand the various states of those under his care? Or to steer them through a thousand difficulties and dangers, to the haven where they would be? Is it not necessary, with respect to the numerous enemies whom he has to encounter? Can a fool cope with all the men that know not God? And with all the spirits of darkness? Nay, he will neither be aware of the devices of *Satan,* nor the craftiness of his children.

2dly, Is it not highly expedient that a guide of souls should have likewise some liveliness and readiness of thought? Or how will he be able, when need requires, to

"answer a fool according to his folly?" How frequent is this need? Seeing we almost every where meet with those empty, yet petulant creatures, who are far "wiser in their own eyes, than seven men that can render a reason." Reasoning therefore is not the weapon to be used with them. You cannot deal with them thus. They scorn being *convinced;* nor can they be *silenced*, but in their own way.

3dly, To a sound understanding, and a lively turn of thought, should be joined a good *memory;* if it may be, *ready*, that you may make whatever occurs in reading or conversation, your own; but however, *retentive*, lest we be "ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." On the contrary, "every scribe instructed unto the kingdom of heaven," every teacher fitted for his work, is "like an householder, who bringeth out of his treasures things new and old."

2. And as to *acquired Endowments*, can he take one step aright, without, first, a competent share of *Knowledge?* A knowledge, 1st, of his own office; of the high trust in which he stands, the important work to which he is called? Is there any hope that a man should discharge his office well, if he knows not what it is? That he should acquit himself faithfully of a trust, the very nature whereof he does not understand? Nay: if he *knows* not the work God has given him to do, he cannot *finish* it.

2dly, No less necessary is a knowledge of the *Scriptures*, which teach us how to teach others: yea, a knowledge of all the Scriptures; seeing Scripture interprets Scripture; one part fixing the sense of another. So that whether it be true or not, that every good textuary is a good divine, it is certain none can be a good divine who is not a good textuary. None else can be "mighty in the Scriptures;" able both to instruct, and to stop the mouths of gainsayers.

In order to do this accurately, ought he not to know the literal meaning of every word, verse, and chapter, without which there can be no firm foundation on which the spiritual meaning can be built? Should he not likewise be able

to deduce the proper corollaries, speculative and practical, from each text; to solve the difficulties which arise, and answer the objections which are or may be raised against it; and to make a suitable application of all, to the consciences of his hearers?

3dly, But can he do this, in the most effectual manner, without a knowledge of the *original Tongues?* Without this, will he not frequently be at a stand, even as to texts which regard practice only? But he will be under still greater difficulties, with respect to controverted Scriptures. He will be ill able to rescue these out of the hands of any man of learning that would pervert them: for whenever an appeal is made to the original, his mouth is stopped at once.

4thly, Is not a knowledge of profane *History* likewise, of ancient customs, of chronology and geography, though not absolutely necessary, yet highly expedient for him that would thoroughly understand the Scriptures? Since the want even of this knowlege is but poorly supplied by reading the comments of other men.

5thly, Some knowlege of the *Sciences* also, is, (to say the least,) equally *expedient.* Nay, may we not say, that the knowledge of one, (whether art or science,) although now quite unfashionable, is even *necessary*, next, and in order to the knowledge of the Scripture itself? I mean, *Logic.* For what is this, if rightly understood, but the *art of good sense?* Of apprehending things clearly, judging truly, and reasoning conclusively? What is it, viewed in another light, but the *art of learning and teaching?* Whether by convincing or persuading? What is there then, in the whole compass of *science*, to be desired in comparison of it?

Is not some acquaintance with what has been termed The second part of logic, *Metaphysicks*, if not so necessary as this, yet highly expedient, 1. In order to clear our apprehension, (without which it is impossible either to judge correctly, or to reason closely or conclusively,) by ranging our ideas under general heads: and, 2. In order to under-

stand many useful writers, who can very hardly be understood without it?

Should not a minister be acquainted too with, at least, the general grounds of *Natural Philosophy?* Is not this a great help to the accurate understanding several passages of Scripture? Assisted by this, he may himself comprehend, and on proper occasions explain to others, how "the invisible things of God are seen from the creation of the world?" "How the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handy work:" till they cry out, "O Lord, how manifold are thy works! In wisdom has thou made them all."

But how far can he go in this, without some knowledge of *Geometry?* which is likewise useful, not barely on this account, but to give clearness of apprehension, and an habit of thinking closely and connectedly.

It must be allowed indeed, that some of these branches of knowledge are not so indispensably necessary as the rest; and therefore no thinking man will condemn the Fathers of the Church, for having in all ages and nations, appointed some to the ministry, who suppose they had the capacity, yet had not had the opportunity of attaining them. But what excuse is this, for one who has the opportunity, and makes no use of it? What can be urged for a person who has had a university education, if he does not understand them all? Certainly, supposing him to have any capacity, to have common understanding, he is inexcusable before God and man.

6thly, Can any who spend several years in those seats of learning, be excused, if they do not add to that of the *languages* and *sciences*, the knowledge of the *Fathers?* The most authentic commentators on Scripture, as being both nearest the fountain, and eminently endued with that Spirit by whom "all Scripture was given?" It will be easily perceived, I speak chiefly of those who wrote before the Council of Nice. But who would not likewise desire to have some acquaintance with those that followed them?

With St. Chrysostom, Basil, Jerome, Austin; and above all, that man of a broken heart, Ephraim Syrus?

7thly, There is yet another branch of knowledge highly necessary for a clergyman, and that is, *Knowledge of the World;* a knowledge of men, of their maxims, tempers, and manners, such as they occur in real life. Without this he will be liable to receive much hurt, and capable of doing little good; as he will not know, either how to deal with men, according to the vast variety of their characters; or to preserve himself from those, who almost in every place lie in wait to deceive.

How nearly allied to this, is, "the Discernment of spirits? so far as it may be acquired by diligent observation." And can a guide of souls be without it? If he is, is he not liable to stumble at every step?

8thly, Can he be without an eminent share of *Prudence?* that most uncommon thing which is usually called *Common Sense?* But how shall we define it? Shall we say, with the schools, that it is, *recta ratio rerum agibilium particularium?* Or is it, an habitual consideration of all the circumstances of a thing?

Quis, quid, ubi, quibus auxiliis, cur, quomodo quando? And a facility of adapting our behaviour to the various combinations of them? However it be defined, should it not be studied with all care, and pursued with all earnestness of application? For what terrible inconveniences ensue, whenever it is remarkably wanting!

9thly, Next to *prudence* or *common sense*, (if it be not included therein,) a clergyman ought certainly to have some degree of *Good-breeding:* I mean, address, easiness, and propriety of behaviour, wherever his lot is cast: perhaps one might add, he should have, (though not the stateliness: for "he is the servant of all," yet) all the courtesy of a gentleman, joined with the correctness of a scholar. Do we want a pattern of this? We have one in St. Paul, even before Felix, Festus, and King Agrippa. One can scarce help thinking, he was one of the best bred men, one of the

finest gentlemen in the world. O that we likewise had the skill to "please all men, for their good unto edification!"

In order to this, especially in our public ministrations, would not one wish for a strong, clear, musical voice, and a good delivery, both with regard to pronunciation and action? I name these here because they are far more acquirable, than has been commonly imagined. A remarkable weak and untunable voice has by steady application become strong and agreeable. Those who stammered almost at every word, have learned to speak clearly and plainly. And many who were eminently ungraceful in their pronunciation, and awkward in their gesture, have in some time, by art and labour, not only corrected that awkwardness of action, and ungracefulness of utterance, but have become excellent in both, and in these respects likewise the ornaments of their profession.

What may greatly encourage those who give themselves up to the work, with regard to all these endowments, many of which cannot be attained without considerable labour, is this: they are assured of being assisted in all their labour, by him who "teacheth man knowledge." And "who teacheth like him?" Who, like him, "giveth wisdom to the simple?" How easy is it for him, (if we desire it, and believe that he is both able and willing to do this,) by the powerful though secret influences of his Spirit, to open and enlarge our understandings; to strengthen all our faculties; to bring to our remembrance whatsoever things are needful, and to fix and sharpen our attention to them; so that we may profit above all who depend wholly on themselves, in whatever may qualify us for our Master's work.

(2.) But all these things, however great they may be in themselves, are little in comparison of those that follow. For what are all other *gifts*, whether natural or acquired, when compared to the *grace* of God? And how ought this to animate and govern the whole *intention*, *affection*, and *practice* of a minister of Christ?

1. As to his *Intention*, both in undertaking this important

office, and in executing every part of it, ought it not to be singly this, to glorify God, and to save souls from death? Is not this absolutely and indispensably necessary, before all and above all things? "If his eye be single, his whole body," his whole soul, his whole work "will be full of light." God "who commanded light to shine out of darkness," will "shine on his heart;" will direct him in all his ways, will give him to see the travail of his soul and be satisfied. But if his eye, his intention be not single, if there be any mixture of meaner motives, (how much more, if those were or are his leading motives in undertaking or exercising this high office!) his whole body, his whole soul will be full of darkness, even such as issues from the bottomless pit: let not such a man think, that he shall have any blessing from the Lord. No; the curse of God abideth on him. Let him not expect to enjoy any settled peace, any solid comfort in his own breast: neither can he hope, there will be any fruit of his labours, any sinners converted unto God.

2. As to his *Affections*. Ought not a "steward of the mysteries of God," a shepherd of the souls for whom Christ died, to be endued with an eminent measure of love to God, and love to all his brethren? A love the same in kind, but in degree far beyond that of ordinary Christians? Can he otherwise answer the high character he bears, and the relation wherein he stands? Without this, how can he go through all the toils and difficulties which necessarily attend the faithful execution of his office? Would it be possible for a parent to go through the pain and fatigue of bearing and bringing up even one child, were it not for that vehement affection, that inexpressible Στοργη, which the Creator has given for that very end? How much less will it be possible for any pastor, any spiritual parent to go through the pain and labour of travailing in birth for, and bringing up many children, to the measure of the full stature of Christ, without a large measure of that inexpressible affection, which "a stranger intermeddleth not with?"

He therefore must be utterly void of understanding, must be a madman of the highest order, who on any consideration whatever, undertakes this office, while he is a stranger to this affection. Nay, I have often wondered that any man in his senses, does not rather dig or thresh for a livelihood, than continue therein, unless he feels at least, (which is *ex remâ lineâ amare*) such an earnest concern for the glory of God, and such a thirst after the salvation of souls, that he is ready to do any thing, to lose any thing, or to suffer any thing, rather than one should perish for whom Christ died.

And is not even this degree of love to God and man utterly inconsistent with the love of the world? With the love of money or praise? With the very lowest degree of either ambition or sensuality? How much less can it consist with that poor, low, irrational, childish principle, the love of diversions? (Surely even a man, were he neither a minister, nor a Christian, should "put away childish things.") Not only this, but the love of pleasure, and what lies still deeper in the soul, the love of ease, flees before it.

*3. As to his *Practice*, "Unto the ungodly, saith God, why dost thou preach my laws?" What is a minister of Christ, a shepherd of souls, unless he is all devoted to God? Unless he abstain with the utmost care and diligence, from every evil word and work; from all appearance of evil; yea, from the most innocent things whereby any might be offended or made weak? Is he not called above others, to be an "example to the flock," in his private as well as public character? An example of all holy and heavenly tempers, filling the heart so as to shine through the life? Consequently, is not his whole life, if he walks worthy of his calling, one incessant labour of love? One continued tract of praising God, and helping man? One series of thankfulness and beneficence? Is he not always humble, always serious, though rejoicing evermore; mild, gentle, patient, abstinent? May you not resemble him to a guardian angel, ministering to those

"who shall be heirs of salvation?" Is he not one sent forth from God, to stand between God and man, to guard and assist the poor, helpless children of men, to supply them both with light and strength, to guide them through a thousand known and unknown dangers, till at the appointed time he returns with those committed to his charge; to his and their Father who is in heaven?

* O who is able to describe such a messenger of God, faithfully executing his high office? Working together with God, with the great Author both of the old and new creation! See his Lord, the eternal SON of GOD, going forth on that work of omnipotence, and creating heaven and earth by the breath of his mouth! See the servant whom he delighteth to honour, fulfilling the counsel of his will, and in his Name speaking the word whereby is raised a new spiritual creation. Impowered by him, he says to the dark, unformed void of nature, "let there be light: and there is light." "Old things are passed away: behold all things are become new." He is continually employed, in what the angels of God have not the honour to do, co-operating with the Redeemer of men, in "bringing many children to glory."

Such is a true minister of Christ. And such, beyond all possibility of dispute, ought both you and I to be.

II. But are we such? What are we in the respects above named? It is a melancholy, but necessary consideration. It is true, many have written upon this subject; and some of them admirably well. Yet few, if any, at least in our nation, have carried their inquiry through all these particulars. Neither have they always spoken so plainly and homely, as the nature of the thing required. But why did they not? Was it because they were unwilling to give pain to those whom they loved? Or were they hindered by fear of disobliging? Or of incurring any temporal inconvenience? Miserable fear! Is any temporal inconvenience whatever to be laid in the balance with the souls of our brethren? Or were they prevented by shame, arising from a consciousness of their own many

and great defects? Undoubtedly this might extenuate the fault, but not altogether remove it. For is it not a wise advice, "Be not ashamed when it concerneth thy soul?" Especially, when it concerns the souls of thousands also? In such a case may God

"Set as a flint our steady face,
Harden to adamant our brow!"

But is there not another hindrance? Should not compassion, should not tenderness hinder us from giving pain? Yes, from giving unnecessary pain. But what manner of tenderness is this? It is like that of a surgeon, who lets his patient be lost, because he is too compassionate to probe his wounds. Cruel compassion! Let me give pain, so I may save life. Let me probe, that God may heal.

(1.) Are we then such as we are sensible we should be, 1st, With regard to natural endowments? I am afraid not. If we were, how many stumbling-blocks would be removed out of the way of serious infidels? Alas, what terrible effects do we continually see of that common, though senseless imagination, "The boy, if he is fit for nothing else, will do well enough for a parson?" Hence it is, that we see (I would to God there were no such instance in all Great Britain or Ireland) dull, heavy, blockish ministers; men of no life, no spirit; no readiness of thought; who are consequently the jest of every pert fool, every lively airy coxcomb they meet. We see others whose memory can retain nothing; therefore they can never be men of considerable knowledge. They can never know much even of those things which they are more nearly concerned to know. Alas! they are pouring the water into a leaky vessel; and the broken cistern can hold no water. I do not say with Plato, That "all human knowledge is nothing but *remembring*." Yet certain it is, that without *remembring*, we can have but a small share of knowledge. And even those who enjoy the most retentive memory, find great reason still to complain,

"Still comes so slow, and life so fast does fly;
We learn so little, and forget so much."

And yet we see and bewail a still greater defect, in some that are in the ministry. They want *sense;* they are defective in *understanding;* their capacity is low and shallow: their apprehension is muddy and confused: of consequence they are utterly incapable, either of forming a true judgment of things, or of reasoning justly upon any thing. O how can these who themselves know nothing aright, impart knowledge to others? How instruct them in all the variety of duty, to God, their neighbour, and themselves? How will they guide them through all the mazes of error, thro' all the intanglements of sin and temptation? How will they apprize them of the *devices of* Satan, and guard them against all *the wisdom of the world?*

It is easy to perceive, I do not speak this for *their* sake; (for they are incorrigible) but for the sake of parents, that they may open their eyes and see, A blockhead can never "*do well enough* for a parson." He may do well enough for a tradesman; so well as to gain fifty or a hundred thousand pounds. He may do well enough for a soldier; nay, (if you pay well for it,) for a well-dressed and very well-mounted officer. He may do well enough for a sailor, and may shine on the quarter-deck of a man of war. He may do so well in the capacity of a lawyer or physician, as to ride in his gilt chariot. But, O! think not of his being a minister, unless you would bring a blot upon your family, a scandal upon our church, and a reproach on the gospel, which he may murder, but cannot teach.

Are we such as we are sensible we should be, 2dly, With regard to *acquired endowments?* Here the matter (suppose we have common understanding) lies more directly within our own power. But under this as well as the following heads, methinks, I would not consider at all, how *many* or how *few*, are either excellent or defective. I would only desire every person who reads this, to apply it to himself. Certainly some one in the nation is defective. Am not I the man?

Let us each seriously examine himself. Have I, 1, Such a *knowledge of Scripture*, as becomes him who undertakes so to explain it to others, that it may *be a light in all their paths?*

Have I a full and clear view of the analogy of faith, which is the clue to guide me through the whole? Am I acquainted with the several parts of Scripture; with all the parts of the Old Testament and the New? Upon the mention of any text, do I know the context, and the parallel places? Have I that point at least of a good divine, the being a good textuary? Do I know the grammatical construction of the four gospels? Of the Acts? Of the Epistles? And am I a master of the spiritual sense (as well as the literal) of what I read? Do I understand the scope of each book, and how every part of it tends thereto? Have I skill to draw the natural inferences deducible from each text? Do I know the objections raised to them or from them by Jews, Deists, Papists, Arians, Socinians, and all other sectaries, who more or less *corrupt* or *cauponize the word of* God? Am I ready to give a satisfactory answer to each of these objections? And have I learned to *apply* every part of the sacred writings, as the various states of my hearers require?

2. Do I understand Greek and Hebrew? Otherwise how can I undertake, (as every minister does,) not only to explain books which are written therein, but to defend them against all opponents? Am I not at the mercy of every one who does understand, or even pretends to understand the original? For which way can I confute his pretence? Do I understand the language of the Old Testament? Critically? At all? Can I read into English one of David's psalms? Or even the first chapter of Genesis? Do I understand the language of the New Testament? Am I a critical master of it? Have I enough of it even to read into English the first chapter of St. Luke? If not, how many years did I spend at school? How many at the university? And what was I doing all those years? Ought not shame to cover my face?

*3. Do I understand *my own office?* Have I deeply considered before God the character which I bear? What is it to be an ambassador of Christ? An envoy from the King of heaven? And do I know and *feel* what is implied

in "watching over the souls of men, as he that must give account?"

Do I understand so much of profane history as tends to confirm and illustrate the sacred? Am I acquainted with the ancient customs of the Jews and other nations mentioned in Scripture? Have I a competent knowledge of chronology, that at least which refers to the sacred writings? And am I so far (if no farther) skilled in geography, as to know the situation, and give some account of all the considerable places mentioned therein?

5. Am I a tolerable master of the sciences? Have I gone through the very gate of them, logic? If not, I am not likely to go much farther, when I stumble at the threshold. Do I understand it, so as to be ever the better for it? To have it always ready for use? So as to apply every rule of it, when occasion is, almost as naturally as I turn my hand? Do I understand it at all? Are not even the *moods* and *figures* above my comprehension? Do not I poorly endeavour to cover my ignorance, by affecting to laugh at their barbarous names? Can I even reduce an *indirect* mood to a *direct*? An *hypothetic* to a *categorical* syllogism? Rather have not my stupid indolence and laziness, made me very ready to believe what the little wits and pretty gentlemen affirm, "That logic is good for nothing?" It is good for this at least, (wherever it is understood,) to make people *talk less;* by shewing them both what is, and what is not to the point; and how extremely hard it is to *prove* any thing. Do I understand *metaphysics?* If not the depths of the schoolmen, the subtleties of Scotus or Aquinas, yet the first rudiments, the general principles of that useful science? Have I conquered so much of it, as to clear my apprehension and range my ideas under proper heads? So much as enables me to read with ease and pleasure, as well as profit, Dr. Henry More's Works, Malebranche's *Search after Truth*, and Dr. Clark's *Demonstration of the Being and Attributes of God?* Do I understand Natural Philosophy? If I have not gone deep therein, have I digested the general grounds of it? Have I mastered Gravesande,

Keil, Sir Isaac Newton's *Principia*, with his *Theory of Light and Colours?* In order thereto, have I laid in some stock of *mathematical* knowledge? Am I master of the mathematical A B C, of *Euclid's Elements?* If I have not gone thus far, if I am such a novice still, what have I been about ever since I came from school?

6. Am I acquainted with the Fathers? At least with those venerable men, who lived in the earliest ages of the church? Have I read over and over the golden remains of Clemens Romanus, of Ignatius and Polycarp? And have I given one reading at least to the works of Justin Martyr, Tertullian, Origen, Clemens Alexandrinus, and Cyprian?

7. Have I any knowledge of the *world?* Have I studied *men*, (as well as books,) and observed their tempers, maxims, and manners? Have I learned, to "beware of men?" To add the wisdom of the serpent to the innocence of the dove? Has God given me by nature, or have I acquired, any measure of the *discernment of spirits?* Or of its near ally, *prudence*, enabling me on all occasions to consider all circumstances, and to suit and vary my behaviour according to the various combinations of them? Do I labour never to be rude or ill-mannered? Not to be remarkably wanting in *good-breeding?* Do I endeavour to copy after those who are eminent for address and easiness of behaviour? Am I (though never light or trifling, either in word or action, yet) *affable* and *courteous* to all men? And do I omit no mean which is in my power, and consistent with my character, of "pleasing all men" with whom I converse, "for their good to edification?"

If I am wanting even in these lowest endowments, shall I not frequently regret the want! How often shall I move heavily, and be far less useful than I might have been? How much more shall I suffer in my usefulness, if I have wasted the opportunities I once had of acquainting myself with the great lights of antiquity, the Antenicene Fathers? Or if I have droned away those precious hours, wherein I might have made myself master of the sciences? How poorly must I many times drag on, for want of the helps which I

have vilely cast away? But is not my case still worse, if I have loitered away the time wherein I should have perfected myself in Greek and Hebrew? I might before this have been critically acquainted with the treasuries of sacred knowledge. But they are now hid from my eyes; they are closely locked up, and I have no key to open them. However, have I used all possible diligence to supply that grievous defect, (so far as it can be supplied now,) by the most accurate knowledge of the English Scriptures? Do I meditate therein day and night? Do I think (and consequently speak) thereof, "when I sit in the house, and when I walk by the way; when I lie down, and when I rise up? By this means have I at length attained a thorough knowledge as of the sacred text, so of its literal and spiritual meaning? Otherwise how can I attempt to instruct others therein? Without this, I am *a blind guide* indeed! I am absolutely incapable of teaching my flock, what I have never learned myself: no more fit to lead souls to God, than I am to govern the world.

(2.) And yet there is a higher consideration than that of *gifts;* higher than any or all of these joined together; a consideration in view of which all *external* and all *intellectual endowments* vanish into nothing. Am I such as I ought to be, with regard to the grace of God? The Lord God enable me to judge aright of this!

And, 1. What was my *Intention* in taking upon me this office and ministry: What was it, in taking charge of this parish, either as minister or curate? Was it always, and is it now, wholly and solely, to glorify God, and save souls? Has my eye been singly fixed on this, from the beginning hitherto? Had I never, have I not now, any mixture in my intention; any alloy of baser metal? Had I, or have I no thought of worldly gain? *Filthy lucre*, as the Apostle terms it. Had I at first, have I now, no secular view? No eye to honour or preferment? To a plentiful income? Or at least, a competency? A warm and comfortable livelihood?

Alas, my brother! "If the light that is in thee be dark-

ness, how great is that darkness!" Was a *comfortable livelihood* then your motive for entering into the ministry? And do you avow this in the face of the sun, and without one blush upon your cheek? I cannot compare you with Simon Magus: you are many degrees beneath him. He offered to *give money* for the *gift of* God, the power of conferring the Holy Ghost. Hereby however he shewed, that he set a higher value on *the gift* than on *the money* which he would have parted with for it. But you do not: you set a far higher value on *the money* than on *the gift;* insomuch that you do not desire, you will not accept of *the gift*, unless *the money* accompany it! The bishop said, when you were ordained, "Receive thou the Holy Ghost." But that was the least of your care. Let who will receive this, so you receive the money, the revenue of a good benefice. While you minister the word and sacraments before God, he gives the Holy Ghost to those who duly receive them: so that through your hands likewise the Holy Ghost is in this sense given now. But you have little concern whether he be or not: so little, that you will minister no longer, he shall be given no more either through your lips or hands, if you have no more money for your labour. O Simon, Simon! what a saint wert thou, compared to many of the most honourable men now in Christendom?

Let not any either ignorantly or wilfully mistake me. I would not "muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn." I know the spiritual labourer too," is worthy of his reward;" and that if we sow unto our flock spiritual things, it is meet that we reap of their carnal things. I do not therefore blame, no, not in any degree, a minister's taking a yearly salary; but I blame his seeking it. The thing blameable is, the having it in his view, as the motive, or any part of the motive, for entering into this sacred office.

Hic nigræ succus loliginis, hæc est
Ærugo mera.

If preferment, or honour, or profit was in his eye, his eye was not single. And our Lord knew no medium between

a single and an evil eye. The eye therefore which is not single is evil. It is a plain, adjudged case. He then that has any other design in undertaking or executing the office of a minister, than purely this, to glorify God and save souls, his eye is not single. Of consequence, it is evil; and therefore his whole body must be full of darkness. The light which is in him is very darkness: darkness covers his whole soul: he has no solid peace: he has no blessing from God: And there is no fruit of his labours.

It is no wonder, that they who see no harm in this, see no harm in adding one living to another, and, if they can, another to that; yet still wiping their mouth, and saying, they have done no evil. In the very first step, their eye was not single: therefore their mind was filled with darkness. So they stumble on still in the same mire, till their feet, "stumble on the dark mountains."

* It is pleaded indeed, That "a small living will not maintain a large family." Maintain! How? It will not "clothe" them "in purple and fine linen:" nor enable them to "fare sumptuously every day." But will not the living you have now, afford you and yours the plain necessaries, yea and conveniences of life? Will it not maintain you in the frugal, Christian simplicity, which becomes a minister of Christ? It will not maintain you in pomp and grandeur, in elegant luxury, in fashionable sensuality. So much the better. If your eyes were open, whatever your income was, you would flee from these as from hell-fire.

It has been pleaded, secondly, "By having a larger income, I am able to do more good." But dare you aver, in the presence of God, that it was singly with this view, only for this end, that you sought a larger income? If not, you are still condemned before God: your eye was not single. Do not therefore quibble and evade. This was not your motive of acting. It was not the desire of doing more good, whether to the souls or bodies of men, it was not the love of God; (you know it was not, your own conscience is a thousand witnesses;) but it was, "the love of money," and the desire of other things," which animated

you in this pursuit. If then the Word of God is true, you are in darkness still: it fills and covers your soul.

I might add, a larger income does not necessarily imply a capacity of doing more *spiritual good.* And this is the highest kind of good. It is good to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked: but it is a far nobler good, to "save souls from death," to pluck poor "brands out of the burning." And it is that to which you are peculiarly called, and to which you have solemnly promised to "bend all your studies and endeavours." But you are by no means sure, that by adding a second living to your first, you shall be more capable of doing good in this kind, than you would have been, had you laid out all your time, and all your strength, on your first flock.

"However I shall be able to do more *temporal good.*" You are not sure even of this. "If riches increase, they are increased that eat them." Perhaps your expenses may rise proportionably with your income. But if not, if you have a greater ability, shall you have a greater willingness to do good? You have no reason in the world to believe this. There are a thousand instances of the contrary. How many have less will, when they have more power? Now they have more money, they love it more. When they had little, they did their "diligence gladly to give of that little:" but since they have had much, they are so far from giving plenteously, that they can hardly afford to give at all.

"But by my having another living, I maintain a valuable man, who might otherwise want the necessaries of life." I answer, 1. Was this your whole and sole motive, in seeking that other living? If not, this plea will not clear you from the charge: your eye was not single. 2. If it was, you may put it beyond dispute. You may prove at once the purity of your intention. Make that valuable man rector of one of your parishes, and you are clear before God and man.

But what can be pleaded for those who have two or more flocks, and take care of none of them? Who just look at

them now and then for a few days, and then remove to a convenient distance, and say, "Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years: take thine ease; eat, drink, and be merry?"

Some years ago, I was asking a plain man, "Ought not he who feeds the flock, to eat of the milk of the flock?" He answered, "Friend, I have no objection to that. But what is that to him who does not feed the flock? He stands on the far side of the hedge, and feeds himself. It is another who feeds the flock. And ought *he* to have the milk of the flock? What canst thou say for him?" Truly, nothing at all. And he will have nothing to say for himself, when the great Shepherd shall pronounce that just sentence, "bind the unprofitable servant hand and foot, and cast him into outer darkness."

I have dwelt the longer on this head, because a right *intention* is the first point of all, and the most necessary of all; inasmuch as the want of this cannot be supplied by any thing else whatsoever. It is the setting out wrong; a fault never to be amended, unless you return to the place whence you came, and set out right. It is impossible therefore to lay too great a stress upon a single eye, a pure *intention;* without which, all our sacrifice, our prayers, sermons, and sacraments, are an abomination to the Lord.

I cannot dismiss this important article, without touching upon one thing more. How many are *directly* concerned therein, I leave to the Searcher of Hearts.

You have been settled in a living or a curacy for some time. You are now going to exchange it for another. Why do you do this? For what reason do you prefer this before your former living or curacy? "Why, I had but fifty pounds a year where I was before, and now I shall have a hundred." And is this your real motive of acting? The true reason why you make the exchange? "It is: and is it not a sufficient reason?" Yes, for a Heathen; but not for one who calls himself a Christian.

Perhaps a more gross infatuation than this was never yet known upon earth. There goes one, who is commis-

sioned to be an ambassador of Christ, a shepherd of never-dying souls, a watchman over the Israel of God, a steward of the mysteries which angels desire to look into. Where is he going? "To London, to Bristol, to Northampton." Why does he go thither? "To get more money." A tolerable reason for driving an herd of bullocks to one market rather than the other; though if a drover does this, without any farther view, he acts as an Heathen, not a Christian. But what a reason for leaving the immortal souls, over whom the Holy Ghost had made you overseer! And yet this is the motive which not only influences in secret, but is acknowledged openly and without a blush! Nay, it is excused, justified, defended; and that not by a few, here and there, who are apparently void both of piety and shame; but by numbers of seemingly religious men, from one end of England to the other!

2. Am I, secondly, such as I ought to be, with regard to my *Affections?* I am *taken from among and ordained for men, in things pertaining to God.* I stand between God and man, by the authority of the great Mediator, in the nearest and most endearing relation both to my Creator and my fellow-creatures. Have I accordingly given my heart to God, and to my brethren for his sake? Do I "love God with all my soul and strength?" And my *neighbour*, every man, as myself? Does this love swallow me up? Possess me whole? Constitute my supreme happiness? Does it animate all my passions and tempers, and regulate all my powers and faculties? Is it the spring which gives rise to all my thoughts, and governs all my words and actions? If it does, not unto me, but unto God be the praise. If it does not, "God, be merciful to me a sinner!"

At least, do I feel such a concern for the glory of God, and such a thirst after the salvation of men, that I am ready to do any thing, however contrary to my natural inclination, to part with any thing, however agreeable to me, to suffer any thing, however grievous to flesh and blood, so I may save one soul from hell? Is this my ruling temper at

all times and in all places? Does it make all my labour light? If not, what a weariness is it! What a drudgery! Had I not far better hold the plough?

But is it possible this should be my ruling temper, if I still love the world? No, certainly. If I "love the world, the love of the Father is not in me." The love of God is not in me, if I love pleasure, so called, or diversion. Neither is it in me, if I am a lover of honour or praise, of dress, or of good eating and drinking. Nay, even indolence, or the love of ease, is inconsistent with the love of God.

What a creature then is a covetous, an ambitious, a luxurious, an indolent, a diversion-loving clergyman! Is it any wonder that infidelity should increase, where any of these are to be found? That many, comparing their spirit with their profession, should blaspheme that worthy name whereby they are called? But "woe be unto him by whom the offence cometh! It were good for that man if he had never been born." It were good for him now, rather than he should continue to turn the lame out of the way, "that a mill-stone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the depth of the sea!"

3. May not you, who are of a better spirit, consider, 3dly, am I such as I ought to be, with regard to my *practice?* Am I in my private life, wholly devoted to God? Am I intent upon this one thing, to do in every point "not my own will, but the will of him that sent me?" Do I carefully and resolutely abstain from every evil word and work? "From all appearance of evil?" From all indifferent things, which might lay a stumbling-block in the way of the weak? Am I zealous of good works? As I have time, do I do good to all men? And that in every kind, and in as high a degree as I am capable?

How do I behave in the public work whereunto I am called? In my pastoral character? Am I a pattern to my flock, "in word, in behaviour, in love, in spirit, in faith, and purity?" Is my *word*, my daily conversation, "always in grace, always meet to minister grace to the hearers?"

Is my *behaviour* suitable to the dignity of my *calling*? Do I walk as Christ also walked? Does the *love* of God and man not only fill my heart, but shine through my whole conversation? Is the *spirit*, the temper which appears in all my words and actions, such as allows me to say with humble boldness, herein "be ye followers of me, as I am of Christ?" Do all who have spiritual discernment take knowledge, (judging of the tree by its fruits,) that "the life which I now live, I live by faith in the Son of God;" and that "in all simplicity and godly sincerity I have my conversation in the world?" Am I exemplarily *pure* from all worldly desire? From all vile and vain affections? Is my life one continued labour of love? One tract of praising God and helping man? Do I in every thing "see him who is invisible?" And, "beholding with open face the glory of the Lord, am I changed into the same image, from glory to glory, by the Spirit of the Lord?"

Brethren, is not this our calling, even as we are Christians? But more eminently as we are ministers of Christ? And why (I will not say, we do fall short, but why) are we satisfied with falling so short of it? Is there any necessity laid upon us, of sinking so infinitely below our calling? Who hath required this at our hands? Certainly not he by whose authority we minister. Is not his Will the same with regard to us, as with regard to his first ambassadors? Is not his Love, and is not his power still the same, as they were in the ancient days? Know we not, that "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever?" Why then may you not be as "burning and as shining lights," as those that shone seventeen hundred years ago? Do you desire to partake of the same burning love, of the same shining holiness? Surely you do. You cannot but be sensible, it is the greatest blessing which can be bestowed on any child of man. Do you design it? Aim at it? "Press on to this mark of the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus?" Do you constantly and earnestly pray for it; then as the Lord liveth, ye shall attain. Only let us pray on, and "tarry

at Jerusalem, till we be endued with power from on high." Let us continue in all the ordinances of God, particularly in meditating on his Word, in "denying ourselves, and taking up our cross daily," and, "as we have time, doing good to all men:" and then assuredly the great Shepherd of us and our flocks, will make us "perfect in every good work, to do his will, and work in us all that is well pleasing in his sight!" This is the desire and prayer of

Your Brother and Servant

In our common Lord,

JOHN WESLEY.

London, Feb. 6, 1756.

A

COLLECTION

OF

FORMS OF PRAYER,

FOR

Every Day in the Week.

PREFACE.

THE Intention of the Collector of these Prayers was, first, to have Forms of Prayer for every Day in the Week, each of which contained something of Deprecation, Petition, Thanksgiving, and Intercession: Secondly, To have such forms for those days which the Christian Church has ever judged peculiarly proper for religious rejoicing, as contained little of Deprecation, but were explicit and large in acts of Love and Thanksgiving. Thirdly, To have such for those days, which, from the age of the Apostles, have been set apart for religious mourning, as contained little of Thanksgiving, but were full and express in acts of Contrition and Humiliation. Fourthly, To have intercessions every day, for all those whom our own Church directs us to remember in our Prayers. And, Fifthly, To comprise in the course of Petitions for the Week, the whole scheme of our Christian duty.

Whoever follows the direction of our excellent Church, in the Interpretation of the Holy Scriptures, by keeping close to that sense of them which the Catholic Fathers and ancient Bishops have delivered to succeeding generations, will easily see that the whole system of Christian Duty is reducible to these five heads.

First: The renouncing ourselves: "If any man will come after me, let him *renounce* * himself, and follow me." This implies, first, A thorough conviction that we are not our own; that we are not the proprietors of ourselves, or any thing we enjoy; that we have no right to dispose of our goods, bodies, souls, or any of the actions or passions of them. Secondly, A solemn resolution to act suitably to this conviction; not to live to ourselves, not to pursue our own desires, not to please ourselves, nor to suffer our own will to be any principle of action to us.

Secondly, Such a renunciation of ourselves naturally leads to the devoting of ourselves to God: as this implies, First, A thorough conviction that we are God's: That he is the Proprietor of all we are, and all we have; and that not only by right of creation, but of purchase; for he "died for all:" and, therefore, died for all, that "they which live, should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him that died for them." Secondly, A solemn resolution to act suitably to this conviction: to live unto God, to render unto God the things which are God's, even all we are, and all we have; to glorify him in our bodies, and in our spirits, with all the powers and all the strength of each, and to make his Will our sole Principle of Action.

Thirdly, Self-denial is the immediate consequence of this. For whosoever has determined, to "live no longer to the desires of men, but to the Will of God," will soon find that he cannot be true to his Purpose without "denying himself, and taking up his cross daily." He will daily feel some desire which this one principle of Action, the Will of God, does not require him to indulge. In this therefore he must either deny himself, or so far deny the Faith. He will daily meet with some means of drawing nearer to God, which are unpleasing to flesh and blood. In this, therefore, he must either take up his cross, or so far renounce his Master.

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* Απαρνησασθω εαυτον. Matt. xvi. 24.

Fourthly, By a constant exercise of Self-denial, the true follower of Christ continually advances in mortification. He is more and more dead to the world, and the things of the world, till at length he can say, with that perfect disciple * of his Lord, "I desire nothing but God;" or with St. Paul, "I am crucified unto the world; I am dead with Christ: I live not, but Christ liveth in me."

Fifthly, Christ liveth in me: This is the fulfilling of the law, the last stage of christian holiness: This maketh the Man of God perfect: He that being dead to the world, is alive to God, the desire of whose Soul is unto his Name, who has given him his whole heart, who delights in him, and in nothing else but what tends to him; who for his Sake burns with Love to all Mankind; who neither thinks, speaks, nor acts, but to fulfil his will, is on the last round of the ladder to heaven, Grace hath had its full work upon his soul; the next step he takes is into Glory.

May the God of glory give unto us who have not already attained this, neither are already perfect, to do this one thing, "forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, to press toward the mark for the prize of our high-calling in Christ Jesus."

May he so enlighten our eyes, that we may "reckon all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord;" and so stablish our hearts that we may rejoice to suffer the loss of all things, and count them but dung, that we may win Christ."

* Marquis de Renty.

A COLLECTION, &c.

SUNDAY MORNING.

ALMIGHTY GOD, Father of all mercies, I thy unworthy servant, desire to present myself with all humility, before thee, to offer my morning sacrifice of love and thanksgiving! Glory be to thee, O most adorable Father, who after thou hadst finished the work of creation, enteredst into thy eternal rest. Glory be to thee, O holy Jesus, who having through the eternal Spirit offered thyself a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice for the sins of the whole world, didst rise again the third day from the dead, and hadst all power given thee, both in heaven and on earth. Glory be to thee, O blessed Spirit, who proceeding from the Father and the Son, didst come down in fiery tongues on the Apostles, on the first day of the week, and didst enable them to preach the glad tidings of Salvation to a sinful world, and has ever since been moving on the faces of men's souls, as thou didst once on the face of the great deep, bringing them out of that dark chaos in which they were involved. Glory be to thee, O holy undivided Trinity, for jointly concurring in the great work of our redemption, and restoring us again to the glorious liberty of the sons of God. Glory be to thee, who in compassion to human weakness, hast appointed a solemn day for the remembrance of thy inestimable benefits. O let me ever esteem it my privilege and happiness, to have a day set apart for the concerns of my soul, a day free from distractions, disengaged from the world, wherein I have nothing to do but to praise and love thee. O let it ever be to me a day sacred to Divine Love, a day of heavenly rest and refreshment.

Let thy Holy Spirit, who on the first day of the week descended in miraculous gifts on thy apostles, descend on

me thy unworthy servant, that I may be always "in the spirit on the Lord's Day." Let his blessed Inspiration prevent and assist me in all the duties of this thy sacred day, that my wandering thoughts may all be fixed on thee, my tumultuous affections composed, and my flat and cold desires quickened into fervent longings and thirstings after thee. O let me join in the prayers and praises of thy church with ardent and heavenly affection, hear thy word with earnest attention and a fixed resolution to obey it. And when I approach the altar, pour into my heart, humility, faith, hope, love, and all those holy dispositions, which become the solemn remembrance of a crucified Saviour. Let me employ this whole day to the ends for which it were ordained, in works of necessity and mercy, in prayer, praise, and meditation; and "let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart be always acceptable in thy sight."

I know, O Lord, that thou hast commanded me, and therefore it is my duty, to love thee with all my heart, and with all my strength. I know thou art infinitely holy and overflowing in all perfections, and therefore it is my duty so to love thee.

I know thou hast created me, and that I have neither being nor blessing but what is the effect of thy power and goodness.

I know thou art the end for which I was created, and that I can expect no happiness but in thee.

I know that in love to me, being lost in sin, thou didst send thy only Son, and that he being the Lord of glory, did humble himself to the death upon the cross, that I might be raised to glory.

I know thou hast provided me with all necessary helps for carrying me through this life to that eternal glory, and this out of the excess of thy pure mercy to me, unworthy of all mercies.

I know thou hast promised to be thyself my "exceeding great reward." Though it is thou alone who thyself "workest in me both to will and to do, of thy good pleasure."

Upon these and many other titles, I confess it is my duty, to love thee my God, with all my heart. Give thy strength unto thy servant, that thy love may fill my heart, and be the motive of all the use I make of my understanding, my affections, my senses, my health, my time, and whatever other talents I have received from thee. Let this, O God, rule my heart, without a rival: let it dispose all my thoughts, words, and works; and thus only can I fulfil my duty and thy command, of loving thee, "with all my heart, and mind, and soul, and strength."

O thou infinite Goodness, confirm thy past mercies to me, by enabling me, for what remains of my life, to be more faithful than I have hitherto been, to this thy great command. For the time I have yet to sojourn upon earth, O let me fulfil this great duty. Permit me not to be in any delusion here: Let me not trust in words, or sighs, or tears, but love thee even as thou has commanded. Let me feel, and then I shall know what it is, to love thee with all my heart.

O merciful God, whatsoever thou deniest me, deny me not this love. Save me from the idolatry of "loving the world, or any of the things of the world." Let me never love any creature, but for thy sake, and in subordination to thy love. Take thou the full possession of my heart, raise there thy throne, and command there, as thou dost in heaven. Being created by thee, let me live to thee; being created for thee, let me ever act for thy glory; being redeemed by thee, let me render unto thee what is thine, and let my spirit ever cleave to thee alone!

Let the prayers and sacrifices of thy holy church offered unto thee this day be graciously accepted; "clothe thy Priests with righteousness, and pardon all thy people who are not prepared according to the preparations of the sanctuary." Prosper all who are sincerely engaged in propagating or promoting thy faith and love:(—) "Give thy Son

(—) Here mention the particular persons you would pray for.

the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession:" that from the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same, thy name may be great among the gentiles. Enable us of this nation, and especially those whom thou hast set over us in church and state, in our several stations, to serve thee in all holiness, and to "know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge." Continue to us the means of grace, and grant we may never provoke thee by our non-improvement to deprive us of them. Pour down thy blessing upon our Universities, that they may ever promote true religion and sound learning. Shew mercy, O Lord, to my father and mother, my brothers and sisters, to all my friends, (—) relations and enemies, and to all that are in affliction. Let thy fatherly hand be over them, and thy Holy Spirit ever with them; that submitting themselves entirely to thy will, and directing all their thoughts, words, and works to thy glory, they and those that are already dead in the Lord, may at length enjoy thee, in the glories of thy kingdom, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, one God, blessed for ever.

SUNDAY EVENING.

General Questions which a serious Christian may propose to himself, before he begins his Evening Devotion.

1. With what degree of attention and fervour did I use my morning prayers, public or private?

2. Have I done any thing without a present, or at least a previous perception, of its direct, or remote tendency to the glory of God?

3. Did I in the morning consider, what particular virtue I was to exercise, and what business I had to do in the day?

4. Have I been zealous to undertake, and active in doing what good I could?

5. Have I interested myself any farther in the affairs of others, than charity required?

6. Have I, before I visited, or was visited, considered how I might thereby give or receive the improvement?

7. Have I mentioned any failing or fault of any man, when it was not necessary for the good of another?

8. Have I unnecessarily grieved any one by word or deed?

9. Have I before, or in every considerable conversation or action, considered, how it might be a mean of improving in the virtue of the day?

Particular Questions relating to the Love of God.

1. Have I set apart some of this day to think upon his perfections and mercies?

2. Have I laboured to make this day, a day of heavenly rest, sacred to divine love?

3. Have I employed those parts of it in works of necessity and mercy, which were not employed in prayer, reading, and meditation?

O MY FATHER, my GOD, I am in thy hands; and may I rejoice above all things in being so: do with me what seemeth good in thy sight: only let me love thee with all my mind, soul, and strength.

I magnify thee for granting me to be born in thy church, and of religious parents; for washing me in thy baptism, and instructing me in thy doctrine of truth and holiness, for sustaining me by thy gracious providence, and guiding me by thy blessed Spirit; for admitting me, with the rest of my christian brethren, to wait on thee at thy public worship: and for so often feeding my soul with thy most precious body and blood, those pledges of love, and sure conveyance of strength and comfort. O be gracious unto all of us, whom thou hast this day *or at any time* admitted to thy holy table.—Strengthen our hearts in thy ways against all our temptations, and make us *more than conquerors* in thy love.

O my Father, my God, deliver me, I beseech thee, from all violent passions: I know how greatly obstructive

these are both of the knowledge and love of thee; O let none of them find a way into my heart; but let me ever possess my soul in meekness. O my God, I desire to fear them more than death; let me not save those cruel tyrants; but do thou reign in my breast; let me ever be thy servant, and love thee with all my heart.

Deliver me, O God, from the love of company and diversions; I know these are so many pleasing snares which continually solicit me to pursue them for their own sakes, and not in order to thy glory. O give me that true wisdom, that using them only because they are necessary for my present weakness, I may thankfully use them so far as they are necessary thereto and no farther. Let me never be enslaved to their false charms, but let my whole heart be reserved for thee.

Deliver me, O God, from too intense an application to even necessary business: I know how this dissipates my thoughts from the one end of all my business, and impairs that lively perception I would ever retain of thee standing at my right hand. I know the narrowness of my heart, and that an eager attention to earthly things leaves it no room for the things of heaven. O teach me to go through all my employments with so truly disengaged a heart, that I may still see thee in all things, and see thee therein as continually looking upon me, and searching my reins, and that I may never impair that liberty of spirit, which is necessary for the love of thee.

Deliver me, O God, from a slothful mind, from all lukewarmness, and all dejection of spirit: I know these cannot but deaden my love to thee; mercifully free my heart from them, and give me a lively, zealous, active, and cheerful spirit, that I may vigorously perform whatever thou commandest, thankfully suffer whatever thou choosest for me, and be ever ardent to obey in all things thy holy love.

Deliver me, O God, from all idolatrous love of any creature. I know infinite numbers have been lost to thee, by loving those creatures for their own sake, which thou

permittest, nay, even commandest to love subordinately to thee. Preserve me, I beseech thee, from all such blind affection: be thou a guard to all my desires, that they fix on no creature any farther than the love of it tends to build me up in the love of thee. Thou requirest me to love thee with all my heart: undertake for me, I beseech thee, and be thou my security, that I may never open my heart to any thing but out of love to thee.

Above all, deliver me, O my God, from all idolatrous self-love. I know, O God, (blessed be thy infinite mercy for giving me this knowledge,) that this is the root of all evil: I know, thou madest me, not to do my own will but thine: I know the very corruption of the devil is, the having a will contrary to thine. O be thou my helper against this most dangerous of all idols, that I may both discern all its subtleties, and withstand all its force. O thou who hast commanded me to renounce myself, give me strength, and I will obey thy command. My choice and desire is, to love myself, and all other creatures in and for thee. O let thy almighty arm so stablish, strengthen, and settle me, that thou mayest ever be the ground and pillar of all my love.

By this love of thee, my God, may my soul be fixed against its natural inconstancy: by this may it be reduced to an entire indifference as to all things else, and simply desire what is pleasing in thy sight. May this holy frame ever warm my breast, that I may serve thee with all my might; and let it consume in my heart all selfish desires, that I may in all things regard, not myself, but thee.

O my God, let thy glorious name be duly honoured and loved by all the creatures which thou hast made. Let thy infinite goodness and greatness be ever adored by all angels and men. May thy church, the catholic seminary of divine love, be protected from all the powers of darkness. O vouchsafe to all, who call themselves by thy name, one short glimpse of thy goodness. May they once taste and see how gracious thou art, that all things else may be tasteless to them; that their desires may be always flying up towards thee, that they may render thee, love, and praise, and obe-

dience pure and cheerful, constant and zealous, universal and uniform, like that which the holy angels render thee in heaven.

Send forth thy blessed Spirit into the midst of these sinful nations, and make us a holy people: Stir up the heart of our Sovereign, of the Royal Family, of the Clergy, the Nobility, and of all whom thou hast set over us, that they may be happy instruments in thy hand, of promoting this good work: be gracious to the Universities, to the Gentry and Commons of this land, and comfort all that are in affliction; let the trial of their faith work patience in them, and perfect them in hope and love. (—)

Bless my father, &c. my friends and relations, and all that belong to this family: all that have been instrumental to my good, by their assistance, advice, example, or writing, and all who do not pray for themselves.

Change the hearts of mine enemies, and give me grace to forgive them, even as thou for *Christ's* sake forgivest us.

O "thou Shepherd of Israel," vouchsafe to receive me this night and ever into thy protection: accept my poor services, and pardon the sinfulness of these and all my holy duties. O let it be thy good pleasure shortly to put a period to sin and misery, to infirmity and death, to complete the number of thine elect, and to hasten thy kingdom; that we, and all that wait for thy salvation, may eternally love and praise thee, O God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, throughout all ages, world without end.

Our Father, &c.

MONDAY MORNING.

General Questions, which may be used every Morning.

Did I think of God first and last?

Have I examined myself how I behaved since last night's retirement?

Am I resolved to do all the good I can this day, and to be diligent in the business of my calling?

O GOD, who art the giver of all good gifts, I thy unworthy servant entirely desire to praise thy name, for all the expressions of thy bounty towards me. Blessed be thy love for giving thy Son to die for our sins, for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory. Blessed be thy love for all the temporal benefits which thou hast with a liberal hand poured out upon me; for my health and strength, food and raiment, and all other necessaries with which thou hast provided thy sinful servant. I also bless thee that, after all my refusals of thy grace, thou still hast patience with me, hast preserved me this night (——) and given me yet another day, to renew and perfect my repentance. Pardon, good Lord, all my former sins, and make me every day more zealous and diligent to improve every opportunity of building up my soul in thy faith, and love, and obedience: make thyself always present to my mind, and let thy love fill and rule my soul, in all those places, and companies, and employments, to which thou callest me this day. In all my passage through this world, suffer not my heart to be set upon it; but always fix my single eye, and my undivided affections on "the prize of my high calling!" This one thing let me do; let me so press toward this, as to make all things else minister unto it; and be careful so to use them, as thereby to fit my soul for that pure bliss, which thou hast prepared for those that love thee!

O thou, who art good and doest good, who extendest thy loving-kindness to all mankind, the work of thine hands, thine image, capable of knowing and loving thee eternally: suffer me to exclude none, O Lord, from my charity, who are the objects of thy mercy: but let me treat all my neighbours with that tender love, which is due to thy servants and to thy children. Thou hast required this mark of my love to thee: O let no temptation expose me to ingratitude, or make me forfeit thy loving-kindness, which is better than life itself! but grant that I may assist all my brethren with my prayers, where I cannot reach them with actual services.

(——) Here you may mention any particular mercy received.

Make me zealous to embrace all occasions that may administer to their happiness, by assisting the needy, protecting the oppressed, instructing the ignorant, confirming the wavering, exhorting the good, and reproving the wicked. Let me look upon the failings of my neighbour as if they were my own; that I may be grieved for them, that I may never reveal them but when charity requires, and then with tenderness and compassion. Let thy love to me, O blessed Saviour, be the pattern of my love to him. Thou thoughtest nothing too dear to part with, to rescue me from eternal misery: O let me think nothing too dear to part with to set forward the everlasting good of my fellow-christians. They are members of thy body; therefore I will cherish them. Thou hast redeemed them with an inestimable price; assisted by thy Holy Spirit, therefore I will endeavour to recover them from a state of destruction; that thus adorning thy holy gospel, by doing good according to my power, I may at last be received into the endearments of thy eternal love, and sing everlasting praise unto the Lamb, that was slain, and that now sitteth on the throne for ever.

Extend, I humbly beseech thee, thy mercy to all men, and let them become thy faithful servants. Let all Christians live up to the holy religion they profess; especially these sinful nations. Be intreated for us, good Lord: be glorified by our reformation, and not by our destruction. "Turn thou us, and so shall we be turned:" O be favourable to thy people; give us grace to put a period to our provocations, and do thou put a period to our punishment. Defend our Church from schism, heresy, and sacrilege, and the King from all treasons and conspiracies. Bless all Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, with apostolical graces, exemplary lives, and sound doctrine. Grant to the Council, wisdom from above; to all Magistrates, integrity and zeal; to the Universities, quietness and industry; and to the Gentry and Commons, pious, and peaceable, and loyal hearts.

Preserve my parents, my brothers and sisters, my friends and relations, and all mankind, in their souls and bodies, (—) forgive mine enemies, and in thy due time make them

kindly affected towards me. Have mercy on all who are "afflicted in mind, body, or estate: give them patience under their sufferings, and a happy issue out of all their afflictions." O grant that we, with those who are already dead in thy faith and fear, may together partake of a joyful resurrection, through him who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end.

Our Father, &c.

MONDAY EVENING.

Particular Questions relating to the love of our Neighbour.

1. Have I thought any thing, but my conscience, too dear to part with, to please or serve my neighbour?

2. Have I rejoiced or grieved with him?

3. Have I observed his infirmities with pity, not with anger?

4. Have I contradicted any one, either where I had no end in view, or where there was no probability of convincing?

5. Have I let him, I thought in the wrong, *(in a trifle,)* have the last word?

MOST great and glorious LORD GOD, I desire to prostrate myself before thy Divine Majesty, under a deep sense of my unworthiness, and with sorrow, and shame, and confusion of face, to confess I have, by my manifold transgressions, deserved thy severest visitations. "Father, I have sinned against heaven, and am no more worthy to be called thy son." O let thy paternal bowels yearn upon me, and for *Jesus Christ* his sake, graciously receive me. Accept my imperfect repentance, and send thy Spirit of Adoption into my heart, that I may again be owned by thee, call thee Father, and share in the blessings of thy children.

Adored be thy goodness for all the benefits thou hast already from time to time bestowed on me; for the good things of this life, and the hope of eternal happiness. Par-

cularly, I offer to thee my humblest thanks for the preservation of me this day, (—) if I have escaped any sin, it is the effect of thy restraining grace: if I have avoided any danger, it was thy hand directed me. To thy name be ascribed the honour and glory. O let the sense of all thy blessings have this effect upon me, to make me daily more diligent in devoting myself, all I am, and all I have, to thy glory.

O my God, fill my soul with so entire a love of thee, that I may love nothing but for thy sake, and in subordination to thy love. Give me grace to study thy knowledge daily, that the more I know thee, the more I may love thee. Create in me a zealous obedience to all thy commands, a cheerful patience under all thy chastisements, and a thankful resignation to all thy disposals. May I ever have awful thoughts of thee, never mention thy venerable Name, unless on just, solemn, and devout occasions; nor even then, without acts of adoration. O let it be the one business of my life to glorify thee, by every word of my tongue, by every work of my hand; by professing thy truth, even to the death, if it should please thee to call me to it: and by engaging all men, as far as in me lies, to glorify and love thee.

Let thy unwearied and tender love to me, make my love unwearied and tender to my neighbour, zealous to pray for, and to procure and promote his health and safety, ease and happiness; and active to comfort, succour, and relieve all whom thy love and their own necessities recommend to my charity. Make me peaceful and reconcilable; easy to forgive, and glad to return good for evil. Make me like thyself, all kindness and benignity, all goodness and gentleness, all meekness and long-suffering. And, O thou Lover of souls, raise in me a compassionate zeal to save the life, the eternal life of souls, and by affectionate and seasonable advice, exhortations and reproof, to reclaim the wicked, and win them to thy love.

Be pleased, O Lord, to take me, with my father and mother, brethren and sisters, my friends and relations, and my enemies, into thy almighty protection this night. Refresh

me with such comfortable rest, that I may rise more fit for thy service. Let me lie down with holy thoughts of thee, and when I am awake, let me be still present with thee.

Shew mercy to the whole world, O Father of all: Let the gospel of thy Son run and be glorified throughout all the earth. Let it be made known to all infidels, and obeyed by all Christians. Be merciful to this church and nation; give unto the Bishops a discerning spirit, that they may make choice of fit persons to serve in thy sacred ministry: and enable all who are ordained to a holy function, diligently to feed the flocks committed to their charge, instructing them in saving knowledge, guiding them by their example, praying for and blessing them, exercising spiritual discipline in thy church, and duly administering the holy sacraments. Multiply thy blessings on our Sovereign, on the Royal Family, and on the Nobles, Magistrates, Gentry, and Commons of this land: that they may all, according to the several talents they have received, be faithful instruments of thy glory. Give to our Schools and Universities, zeal, prudence, and holiness. Visit in mercy all the children of affliction, (—) relieve their necessities, lighten their burdens; give them a cheerful submission to thy gracious will, and at length bring them and us, with those that already rest from their labours, into the joy of our Lord, to whom with thee, O Father, and thee, O Holy Ghost, be all praise, now and for ever.

TUESDAY MORNING.

O ETERNAL and merciful FATHER, I give thee humble thanks (increase my thankfulness, I beseech thee) for all the blessings, spiritual and temporal, which in the riches of thy mercy, thou hast poured down upon me. Lord, let me not live but to love thee, and to glorify thy name. Particularly, I give thee most unfeigned thanks for preserving me from my birth to this moment, and for bringing me safe to the beginning of this day (—), in which, and in all the days of my life, I beseech thee, that all my thoughts, words, and works,

may tend to thy glory. Heal, O Father of Mercies, all my infirmities, (—) strengthen me against all my follies; forgive me all my sins (—), and let them not cry louder in thine ears for vengeance, than my prayers for mercy and forgiveness.

O blessed Lord, enable me to fulfil thy commands, and command what thou wilt. O thou Saviour of all that trust in thee, do with me what seemeth best in thine own eyes: only give me the mind which was in thee: let me learn of thee to be meek and lowly, pour into me the whole spirit of humility; fill, I beseech thee, every part of my soul with it, and make it the constant, ruling habit of my mind, that all my other tempers may arise from it: that I may have no thoughts, no desires, no designs, but such as are the true fruit of a lowly spirit. Grant that I may think of myself as I ought to think, that I may "know myself even as I am known." Herein may I exercise myself continually, when I lie down and when I rise up, that I may always appear poor, and base, and vile in my own eyes. O convince me, that "I have neither learned wisdom, nor have the knowledge of the Holy One." Give me a lively sense that I am nothing, that I have nothing, that I can do nothing. Enable me to feel that I am all ignorance and error, weakness and uncleanness, sin and misery; that I am not worthy of the air I breathe, the earth I tread upon, or the sun that shines upon me. And let me be fully content when all other men think of me as I do of myself. O save me from either desiring or seeking the honour that cometh of men. Convince me that the words of praise, "when smoother than oil," then especially "are very swords." Give me to dread them more than the "poison of asps," or "the pestilence that walketh in darkness." And when these cords of pride, these snares of death do overtake me, suffer me not to take any pleasure in them, but enable me instantly to flee unto thee, O Lord, and to complain unto my God. Let all my bones cry out, "Thou art worthy to be praised; so shall I be safe from mine enemies."

Bless, O gracious Father, all the nations whom thou hast

placed upon the earth, with the knowledge of thee, the only true God: but especially bless thy holy Catholic Church, and fill it with truth and grace; where it is corrupt, purge it; where it is in error, rectify it; where it is right, confirm it; where it is divided, and rent asunder, heal the breaches thereof, "O thou Holy One of Israel." Replenish all whom thou hast called to any office therein, with truth of doctrine and innocency of life. Let their prayers be as precious incense in thy sight, that their cries and tears for the city of their God may not be in vain.

O Lord, hear the King in the day of his trouble, let thy Name, O God, defend him, grant him his heart's desire, and fulfil all his mind: set his heart firm upon thee, and upon other things only as they are in and for thee. O defend him and his royal relations with the saving strength of thy right-hand.

Have mercy upon this Kingdom, and forgive the sins of this people: turn thee unto us, bless us, and cause thy face to shine on our desolations. Inspire the Nobles and Magistrates with prudent zeal, the Gentry and Commons with humble loyalty. Pour down thy blessings on all Seminaries of true religion and learning, that they may remember and answer the end of their institution. Comfort all the sons and daughters of affliction, especially those who "suffer for righteousness' sake." Bless my father and mother, my brethren and sisters, my friends and relations, and all that belong to this family. Forgive all who are mine enemies, and so reconcile them to me and thyself, that we all, together with those that now sleep in thee, may awake to life everlasting, through thy merit and intercession, O blessed Jesus; to whom with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be ascribed by all creatures, "all honour, and might, and wisdom, and glory, and blessing."

Our Father, &c.

TUESDAY EVENING.

Particular Questions relating to Humility.

1. Have I laboured to conform all my thoughts, words,

and actions, to these fundamental maxims; *I am nothing, I have nothing, I can do nothing?*

2. Have I set apart some time, this day, to think upon my infirmities, follies, and sins?

3. Have I ascribed to myself any part of any good which God did by my hand?

4. Have I said or done any thing, with a view to the praise of men?

5. Have I desired the praise of men?

6. Have I taken pleasure in it?

7. Have I commended myself, or others, to their faces, unless for God's sake, and then with fear and trembling?

8. Have I despised any one's advice?

9. Have I, when I thought so, said, *I am in the wrong?*

10. Have I received contempt for things indifferent, with meekness; for doing my duty, with joy?

11. Have I omitted justifying myself, where the glory of God was not concerned? Have I submitted to be thought in the wrong?

12. Have I, when contemned, *first* prayed God it might not discourage, or puff me up? *secondly*, that it might not be imputed to the contemner? *thirdly*, that it might heal my pride?

13. Have I, without some particular good in view, mentioned the contempt I had met with?

I DESIRE to offer unto thee, O Lord, my evening sacrifice, the sacrifice of a contrite spirit. "Have mercy upon me, O God, after thy great goodness, and after the multitude of thy mercies, do away mine offences." Let thy unspeakable mercy free me from the sins I have committed, and deliver me from the punishment I have deserved (—). O save me from every work of darkness, and cleanse me *from all filthiness of flesh and spirit*, that, for the time to come, I may, with a pure heart and mind, follow thee the only true God.

O Lamb of God, who both by thy example and precept didst instruct us to be meek and humble, give me grace throughout my whole life, in every thought, and word, and

work, to imitate thy meekness and humility. O mortify in me the whole body of pride: grant me to feel that I am nothing and have nothing, and that I deserve nothing but shame and contempt, but misery and punishment. Grant, O Lord, that I may look for nothing, claim nothing, and resent nothing; and that I may go through all the scenes of life, not seeking my own glory, but looking wholly unto thee, and acting wholly for thee. Let me never speak any word that may tend to my own praise, unless the good of my neighbour require it. And even then let me beware, lest to heal another, I wound my own soul. Let my ears and my heart be ever shut to the praise that cometh of men, and let me "refuse to hear the voice of the charmer, charm he ever so sweetly." Give me a dread of applause, in whatsoever form, and from whatsoever tongue it cometh. I know that "many stronger men have been slain by it," and that it "leadeth to the chambers of death." O deliver my soul from this snare of hell; neither let me spread it for the feet of others. Whosoever perish thereby, be their blood upon their own head, and let not my hand be upon them.

O thou Giver of every good and perfect gift, if at any time thou pleasest to work by my hand, teach me to discern what is my own from what is another's, and to render unto thee the things that are thine. As all the good that is done on earth, thou dost it thyself, let me ever return to thee all the glory. Let me, as a pure crystal, transmit all the light thou pourest upon me; but never claim as my own what is thy sole property.

O thou who wast despised and rejected of men, when I am slighted by my friends, disdained by my superiors, overborne, or ridiculed by my equals, or contemptuously treated by my inferiors, then let me cry out with thy holy Martyr,* "It is now that I begin to be a disciple of Christ." Then let me thankfully accept, and faithfully use the happy occasion of improving in thy meek and lowly Spirit. If for thy sake "men cast out my name as evil, let me rejoice and be

* Ignatius.

exceeding glad." If for my own infirmities, let me acknowledge thy goodness, in giving me this medicine to heal my pride and vanity, and beg thy mercy for those physicians of my soul, by whose hands it is administered to me.

Make me to remember thee on my bed, and think upon thee when I am waking: thou hast preserved me from all the dangers of the day past: thou hast been my support from my youth up until now; under the shadow of thy wings let me pass this night in comfort and peace.

O thou Creator and Preserver of mankind, have mercy upon all conditions of men: purge thy holy Catholic Church from all heresy, and schism, and superstition. Bless our Sovereign in his person, in his actions, in his relations, and in his people. May it please thee "to endue his Council, and all the Nobility, with grace, wisdom, and understanding;" the Magistrates with equity, courage, and prudence; the Gentry with industry and temperance, and all the Commons of this land, with increase of grace, and a holy, humble, thankful heart.

O pour out upon our whole Church, and especially upon the Clergy thereof, the continual dew of thy blessing. Grant to our Universities peace and piety, and to all that labour under affliction, constant patience and timely deliverance. Bless all my kindred, (especially my father and mother, my brothers and sisters,) and all my friends and benefactors (—). Turn the hearts of mine enemies (—); forgive them and me all our sins, and grant that we and all the members of thy holy Church, may find mercy in the dreadful day of judgment, through the mediation and satisfaction of thy blessed Son Jesus Christ, to whom with thee and the Holy Ghost the Comforter, be all honour, praise, and thanksgiving, in all the Churches of the saints for ever.

WEDNESDAY MORNING.

O THOU who dwellest in the light which no man can approach, in whose presence there is no night, in the light of

whose countenance there is perpetual day: I thy sinful servant, whom thou hast preserved this night, who live by thy power this day, bless and glorify thee, for the defence of thy Almighty Providence, (—) and humbly pray thee, that this, and all my days may be wholly devoted to thy service: Send thy Holy Spirit to be the Guide of all my ways, and the Sanctifier of my soul and body. Save, defend, and build me up in thy fear and love; give unto me the light of thy countenance, peace from heaven, and the salvation of my soul in the day of the Lord Jesus.

O thou who art "the way, the truth, and the life," thou hast said no man can follow thee, unless he renounce himself. I know, O Saviour, that thou hast laid nothing upon us but what the design of thy love made necessary for us. Thou sawest our disease, our idolatrous self-love, whereby we fell away from God, to be as gods ourselves, to please ourselves, and to do our own will. Lo, I come! May I ever renounce my own, and do thy blessed will in all things!

I know, O Lord, thou didst empty thyself of thy eternal glory, and tookest upon thee *the form of a servant.* Thou who madest all men to serve and praise thee, didst not please thyself, but wast the servant of all. Thou, O Lord of the hosts of heaven and earth, didst yield thy cheeks to be smitten, thy back to be scourged, and thy hands and feet to be nailed to an accursed tree. Thus didst thou, our great Master, renounce thyself: and can we think much of renouncing our vile selves? My Lord and my God, let me not presume to be above my Master; let it be the one desire of my heart, to be as my Master, to do, not my own will, but the will of him that sent me.

O thou whose life did cry aloud, "Father, not mine, but thy will be done," give me grace to walk after thy pattern, to tread in thy steps. Give me grace to "take up my cross daily," to endure myself to bear hardship. Let me exercise myself unto godliness betimes, before the rains descend, and the floods beat upon me: Let me now practise what is not pleasing to flesh and blood, what is not agreeable to my

senses, appetites, and passions: that I may not hereafter renounce thee, for fear of suffering for thee, but may stand firm in the "day of my visitation."

O thou, who didst not please thyself, although for thy "pleasure all things are and were created," let some portion of thy Spirit descend on me, that I may "deny myself and follow thee." Strengthen my soul, that I may be temperate in all things: that I may never use any of thy creatures, but in order to some end thou commandest me to pursue, and in that measure and manner which most conduces to it. Let me never gratify any desire, which has not thee for its ultimate object. Let me ever abstain from pleasures, which do not prepare me for taking pleasure in thee, as knowing that all such war against the soul, and tend to alienate it from thee. O save me from ever indulging either "the desire of the flesh, the desire of the eye, or the pride of life." Set a watch, O Lord, over my senses and appetites, my passions and understanding, that I may resolutely deny them any gratification, which has no tendency to thy glory. O train me up in this good way, "that when I am old, I may not depart from it:" that I may be at length of a truly mortified heart, "crucified unto the world, and the world crucified unto me."

Hear also my prayers for all mankind, and guide their feet into the way of peace: for thy Holy Catholic Church, let her live by thy Spirit, and reign in thy glory. Remember that branch of it which thou hast planted in these kingdoms: especially the stewards of thy holy mysteries; give them such zeal, and diligence, and wisdom, that they may save both themselves and those that hear them.

Preserve, O great King of heaven and earth, all Christian Princes, especially our Sovereign and his Family. Grant that his Council, and all that are in authority under him, may truly and indiscriminately administer justice. And to all thy people give thy heavenly grace, that they may faithfully serve thee all the days of their lives. Bless the Universities with prudence, unity, and holiness. However the way of truth be evil spoken of, may they walk in it even

to the end. Whoever forget or blaspheme their high-calling, may they ever remember, that they are a "chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people:" and accordingly "shew forth the praise of him, who hath called them out of darkness into his marvellous light."

With a propitious eye, O gracious Lord, behold all my enemies, and all that are in affliction; give them patience under their sufferings, and grant that they, and all the members of thy Church, may find rest, *where the wicked cease from troubling*, and mercy in the great day of trial. In particular, I commend to thy mercy, my father and mother, my brethren and sisters, my friends and relations (—). Lord, thou best knowest all their wants: O suit thy blessings to their several necessities.

Let these my prayers, O Lord, find access to the Throne of Grace, through the Son of thy love, Jesus Christ the Righteous: To whom with thee, O Father, in the unity of the Spirit, be all love and obedience now and for ever!

Our Father, &c.

WEDNESDAY EVENING.

Particular Questions relating to Mortification.

1. Have I done any thing merely because it was pleasing?

2. Have I not only done what passion solicited me to, but done just the contrary?

3. Have I received the inconveniences I could not avoid, as means of mortification chosen for me by God?

4. Have I contrived pretences to avoid self-denial in particular?

5. Have I thought any occasion of denying myself too small to be embraced?

6. Have I submitted my will to the will of every one that opposed it; except where the glory of God was concerned?

7. Have I set apart some time for endeavouring after a lively sense of the sufferings of Christ, and my own sins? For deprecating God's judgment, and thinking how to amend?

O ALMIGHTY LORD of heaven and earth, I desire with fear and shame to cast myself down before thee, humbly confessing my manifold sins, and unsufferable wickedness. I confess, O great God, that I have sinned grievously against thee, by thought, word, and deed; (particularly this day.) Thy words and thy laws, O God, are holy, and thy judgments are terrible! But I have broken all thy righteous laws, and incurred thy severest judgments; and where shall I appear when thou art angry?

But, O Lord my Judge, thou art also my Redeemer! I have sinned, but thou, O blessed Jesus, art my Advocate. "Enter not into judgment with me," lest I die; but spare me, gracious Lord, "spare thy servant whom thou hast redeemed with thy most precious blood." O reserve not evil in store for me against the day of vengeance, but let thy mercy be magnified upon me. Deliver me from the power of sin, and preserve me from the punishment of it.

Thou, whose mercy is without measure, whose goodness is unspeakable, despise not thy returning servant, who earnestly begs for pardon and reconciliation. Grant me the forgiveness of what is past, and a perfect repentance of all my sins, that for the time to come, I may, with a pure spirit, do thy will, O God, walk humbly with thee, conversing charitably with men, possessing my soul in resignation and holiness, and my body in sanctification and honour.

My Lord *and my* God, I know that unless I am planted together with thee in the likeness of thy death, I cannot rise in the likeness of thy resurrection. O strengthen me, that by "denying myself, and taking up my cross daily," I may crucify the old man, and utterly destroy the whole body of sin. Give me grace to *mortify all my members which are upon earth*, all my works and affections which are according to corrupt nature. Let me be dead unto sin, unto every transgression of thy law, which is holy, merciful, and per-

fect. Let me be dead unto the world, and all that is in the world, the "desires of the flesh, the desires of the eye, and the pride of life." Let me be dead unto pleasure, so far as it tendeth not to thee, and to those pleasures which are at thy right-hand for evermore. Let me be dead unto my own will, and alive only unto thine. I am not my own; thou hast "bought me with a price, with the price of thine own blood." And thou didst therefore die for all, "that we should not henceforth live unto ourselves, but unto him that died for us." Arm thou me with this mind; circumcise my heart, and make me a new creature. Let me no longer live to the desires of men, but to the will of God. Let thy Holy Spirit enable me to say with thy blessed Apostle, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live: yet not I, but Christ liveth in me."

O thou great Shepherd of souls, bring home into thy fold all that are gone astray. Preserve thy Church from all heresy and schism, from all that persecute or oppose the truth: and give unto thy ministers wisdom and holiness, and the powerful aid of thy blessed Spirit. Advance the just interests, and preserve the persons of all Christian Princes, especially our Sovereign: give to him and his royal family, and to all his subjects, in their several stations, particularly those that are in authority among them, grace to do thy will in this world, and eternal glory in the world to come.

Bless, O Lord, all our nurseries of piety and schools of learning, that they may devote all their studies to thy glory. Have mercy on all that are in affliction: remember the poor and needy, the widow and fatherless, the friendless and oppressed: heal the sick and languishing, give them a sanctified use of thy rod, and when thou seest it expedient for them, receive them into the number of thy departed saints, and with them into thine everlasting kingdom.

O my God, I praise thee for thy continual preservation of me, for thy fatherly protection over me this day, (—), for all the comforts with which thou surroundest me, spiritual and temporal, particularly for leave now to pray unto thee.

O accept the poor services, pardon the sinfulness of this and all my holy duties, and bless me, my friends and relations, my benefactors and mine enemies, (this night and ever) with the blessings of thy children.

These, my prayers, O most merciful Father, vouchsafe to hear, through the mediation of Jesus Christ our Redeemer, who with thee and the Holy Ghost is worshipped and glorified, in all Churches of the saints, one God, blessed for ever!

Our Father, &c.

THURSDAY MORNING.

O ETERNAL GOD, my sovereign Lord, I acknowledge all I am, all I have is thine. O give me such a sense of thy infinite goodness, that I may return to thee all possible love and obedience.

I humbly and heartily thank thee for all the favours thou hast bestowed upon me; for creating me after thine own image, for thy daily preserving me by thy good providence, for redeeming me by the death of thy blessed Son, and for the assistance of thy Holy Spirit; for causing me to be born in a Christian Country, for blessing me with plentiful means of salvation, with religious parents and friends, and frequent returns of thy blessed sacrament. I also thank thee for all thy temporal blessings; for the preservation of me this night, (—) for my health, strength, food, raiment, and all the other comforts and necessaries of life. O may I always delight to *praise thy holy Name*, and above all thy benefits, love thee, my great benefactor.

And, O FATHER of Mercies, shut not up thy bowels of compassion towards me, a vile and miserable sinner; despise not the work of thine own hands, the purchase of thy Son's blood. For his sake I most humbly implore forgiveness of all my sins. *Lo, I come now to do thy will alone;* and am resolved by thy assistance, to have no longer any choice of my own, but with singleness of heart to obey thy good

pleasure: "Father, not my will, but thine be done," in all my thoughts, words, and actions.

O thou all-sufficient God of angels and men, who art above all, and through all, and in all, from whom, by whom, and in whom are all things; "in whom we live, move, and have our being;" may my will be as entirely and continually derived from thine, as my being and happiness are!

I believe, O sovereign Goodness, O mighty Wisdom, that thou dost sweetly order and govern all things, even the most minute, even the most noxious, to thy glory and *the good of those that love thee!* I believe, O Father of the families of heaven and earth, that thou so disposest all events, as may best magnify thy goodness to all thy children, especially those whose "eyes wait upon thee." I most humbly beseech thee, teach me to adore all thy ways, though I cannot comprehend them: teach me to be glad that thou art King, and to give thee thanks for all things that befal me; seeing thou hast chosen them for me, and hast thereby *set to thy seal that they are good.* And for that which is to come, give me thy grace to do in all things what pleaseth thee, and then, with an absolute submission to thy wisdom, to leave the issues of them in thy hand.

O Lord Jesu, I give thee my body, my soul, my substance, my fame, my friends, my liberty, my life; dispose of me, and all that is mine, as it seemeth best unto thee. They are not mine, but thine; claim me as thy right, keep me as thy charge, love me as thy child! Fight for me when I am assaulted, heal me when I am wounded, and revive me when I am destroyed.

O help me with thy grace, that whatsoever I shall do or suffer this day may tend to thy glory. Keep me in love to thee, and to all men. Do thou direct my paths, and teach me to set thee always before me. Let not the things of this life, or my manifold concerns therein, alienate any part of my affections from thee; nor let me ever pursue or regard them, but for thee, and in obedience to thy will.

Extend, O Lord, thy pity to the whole race of mankind: enlighten the Gentiles with thy truth, and bring into thy flock thy ancient people the Jews. Be gracious to thy holy Catholic Church, and grant that she may always preserve that doctrine and discipline which thou hast delivered to her. Grant, that all of this nation, especially our Governors and the Clergy, may, "whatsoever they do, do all to thy glory." Bless our nurseries of true religion and useful learning, and let them not neglect the end of their institution. Be merciful to all that are in distress, (—) that struggle with pain, poverty, or reproach: be thou a guide to them that travel by land or by water: give a strong and quiet spirit to those who are condemned to death, liberty to prisoners and captives, and ease and cheerfulness to every sad heart. O give spiritual strength and comfort to scrupulous consciences, and to them that are afflicted by evil spirits. Pity idiots and lunatics, and give life and salvation to all to whom thou hast given no understanding. Give to all that are in error the light of thy truth; bring all sinners to repentance, (—) and give to all heretics humility and grace to make amends to thy Church, by the public acknowledgment of a holy faith. Bless all my friends and relations, acquaintance and enemies: (—) unite us all to one another by mutual love, and to thyself by constant holiness; that we, together with all those who are gone before us in thy faith and fear, may find a merciful acceptance in the last day, through the merits of thy blessed Son, to whom with thee and the Holy Ghost, be all glory, world without end.

Our Father, &c.

THURSDAY EVENING.

Particular Questions relating to Resignation and Meekness.

1. Have I endeavoured to will what God wills, and that only?

2. Have I received every thing that has befallen me, without my choice, as the choice of infinite wisdom and goodness for me, with thanks?

3. Have I (after doing what he requires me to do concerning them) left all future things absolutely to God's disposal? That is, Have I laboured to be wholly indifferent to which soever way he shall ordain for me?

4. Have I resumed my claim to my body, soul, friends, fame, or fortune, which I have made over to God; or repented of my gift, when God accepted any of them at my hands?

5. Have I endeavoured to be cheerful, mild, and courteous, in whatever I said or did?

6. Have I said any thing with a stern look, accent, or gesture? Particularly with regard to religion?

MY LORD and my GOD, thou seest my heart, and my desires are not hid from thee. I am encouraged by my happy experience of thy goodness, particularly this day past, to present myself before thee, notwithstanding I know myself unworthy of the least favour from thee. I am ashamed, when I think how long I have lived a stranger, yea, an enemy to thee, taking upon me to dispose of myself, and to please myself in the main course of my life. But I now unfeignedly desire to return unto thee, and renouncing all interest and property in myself, to give up myself entirely to thee: I would be thine, and only thine for ever. But I know I am nothing, and can do nothing of myself; and if ever I am thine I must wholly be indebted to thee for it. O my God, my Saviour, my Sanctifier, turn not away thy face from a poor soul that seeks thee: but as thou hast kindled in me these desires, so confirm, increase, and satisfy them. Reject not that poor gift that I would make of myself unto thee, but teach me so to make it, that it may be acceptable in thy sight. Lord, hear me, help me, and shew mercy unto me, for Jesus Christ's sake.

To thee, O God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, my Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier, I give up myself entirely: May I no longer serve myself, but thee, all the days of my life.

I give thee my understanding: may it be my only care

to know thee, thy perfections, thy work, and thy will. Let all things else be *as dung and dross* unto me for the excellency of this knowledge. And let me silence all reasonings against whatsoever thou teachest me, who canst neither deceive, nor be deceived.

I give thee my will: may I have no will of my own; whatsoever thou willest, may I will, and that only: may I will thy glory in all things as thou dost, and make that my end in every thing; may I ever say with the Psalmist, "Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee." May I delight to do thy will, O God, and rejoice to suffer it. Whatever threatens me, let me say, "It is the *Lord*, let him do what seemeth him good;" and whatever befalls me, let me give thanks, since it is thy will concerning me.

I give thee my affections, do thou dispose of them all: be thou my love, my fear, my joy; and may nothing have any share in them, but with respect to thee and for thy sake. What thou lovest, may I love, what thou hatest, may I hate, and that in such measures as thou art pleased to prescribe me.

I give thee my body: may I glorify thee with it, and preserve it holy, fit for thee, O God, to dwell in; may I neither indulge it, nor use too much rigour towards it: but keep it, as far as in me lies, healthy, vigorous, and active, and fit to do thee all manner of service, which thou shalt call for.

I give thee all my worldly goods: may I prize them and use them only for thee. May I faithfully restore to thee, in thy Poor, all thou hast intrusted me with, above the necessaries of my life; and be content to part with them too, whenever thou, my Lord, shalt require them at my hands.

I give thee my credit and reputation: may I never value them, but only in respect of thee; nor endeavour to maintain them, but as they may do thee service and advance thy honour in the world.

I give thee myself and my all: let me look upon myself

to be nothing, and to have nothing out of thee. Be thou the sole Disposer and Governor of myself and all I have; be thou my Portion and my All.

O my God and my all, when hereafter I shall be tempted to break this solemn engagement, when I shall be prest to conform to the world, and to the company and customs that surround me, may my answer be, "I am not my own;" I am not for myself, nor for the world, but for my God. I will give unto God the things which are God's. God, be merciful to me a sinner.

Have mercy, O Father of the spirits of all flesh, on all mankind. Convert all Jews, Turks, and Heathens to thy truth. Bless the Catholic Church; heal its breaches, and establish it in truth and peace. Preserve and defend all Christian Princes, especially our Sovereign and his Family. Be merciful to this nation; bless the Clergy with soundness of doctrine and purity of life; the Council with wisdom, the Magistrates with integrity and zeal, and the people with loyalty. Bless the Universities with learning and holiness, that they may afford a constant supply of men fit and able to do thee service.

Shower down thy graces on all my relations, on all my friends, and all that belong to this family. Comfort and relieve those that labour under any affliction of body or mind; especially those who suffer for the testimony of a good conscience. Visit them, O gracious Lord, in all their distresses. Thou knowest, thou seest them under all. O stay their souls upon thee; and give them to rejoice that they are counted worthy to suffer for thy name's sake, and constantly to look unto the Author and Finisher of their faith. Supply abundantly to all their souls who are in prison, the want of thy holy ordinances, and in thy good time, deliver them, and be merciful unto them, as thou usest to be unto them that love thy name. Those that love or do good to me, reward seven-fold into their bosom: (—) those that hate me, (—) convert and forgive: and grant us all, together with thy whole Church, an entrance into thine everlasting kingdom, through Jesus

Christ; to whom with thee, and the blessed Spirit, Three Persons and One God, be ascribed all majesty, dominion, and power, now and for evermore. Amen.

Our Father, &c.

FRIDAY MORNING.

ALMIGHTY and everlasting GOD, I bless thee from my heart, that of thy infinite goodness thou hast preserved me this night past, and hast with the impregnable defence of thy providence, protected me from the power and malice of the devil. Withdraw not, I humbly intreat thee, thy protection from me, but mercifully this day watch over me with the eyes of thy mercy; direct my soul and body, according to the rule of thy will, and fill my heart with thy Holy Spirit, that I may pass this day, and all the rest of my days, to thy glory.

O Saviour of the world, GOD of Gods, Light of Light, thou that art the Brightness of thy Father's glory, the express Image of his person; thou that hast destroyed the power of the devil, that hast overcome death, *that sittest at the right hand of the Father;* thou that wilt speedily come down in thy Father's glory to judge all men according to their works: be thou my light and my peace: destroy the power of the devil in me, and make me a new creature. O thou who didst cast seven devils out of Mary Magdalen, cast out of my heart all corrupt affections. O thou who didst raise Lazarus from the dead, raise me from the death of sin. Thou who didst cleanse the lepers, heal the sick, and give sight to the blind, heal the diseases of my soul: open my eyes, and fix them singly on the prize of my high-calling, and cleanse my heart from every desire, but that of advancing thy glory.

O Jesus, poor and abject, unknown and despised, have mercy upon me, and let me not be ashamed to follow thee. O Jesus, hated, calumniated, and persecuted; have mercy upon me, and let me not be afraid to come after thee. O

Jesus, betrayed and sold at a vile price, have mercy upon me: and make me content to be as my Master. O Jesus, blasphemed, accused, and wrongfully condemned, have mercy upon me, and teach me to endure the contradiction of sinners. O Jesus, clothed with a habit of reproach and shame, have mercy upon me, and let me not seek my own glory. O Jesus, insulted, mocked, and spit upon, have mercy upon me, and let me run with patience the race set before me. O Jesus, dragged to the pillar, scourged, and bathed in blood, have mercy upon me, and let me not faint in the fiery trial. O Jesus, crowned with thorns and hailed in derision; O Jesus, burthened with our sins, and the curses of the people; O Jesus, affronted, outraged, buffetted, overwhelmed with injuries, griefs, and humiliations; O Jesus, hanging on the accursed tree, bowing the head, giving up the ghost, have mercy upon me, and conform my whole soul to thy holy, humble, suffering spirit. O thou, who for the love of me hast undergone such an infinity of sufferings and humiliations, let me be wholly "emptied of myself," that I may rejoice to take up my cross daily and follow thee. Enable me too, to endure the pain, and despise the shame; and if it be thy will, to resist even unto blood.

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, I, miserable sinner, humbly acknowledge that I am altogether unworthy to pray for myself. But since thou hast commanded me to make prayers and intercessions for all men, in obedience to thy command, and confidence of thy unlimited goodness, I commend to thy mercy the wants and necessities of all mankind. Lord, let it be thy good pleasure to restore to thy Catholic Church, primitive peace and purity: to shew mercy to these sinful nations, and give us grace at length to break off our sins by repentance: defend our Church from all the assaults of schism, heresy, and sacrilege, and bless all Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, with apostolical graces. O let it be thy good pleasure to defend the King from all his enemies spiritual and temporal; to bless all his royal relations; to grant to the Council, wisdom; to the Magistrates,

zeal and prudence; to the Gentry and Commons, piety and loyalty.

Lord, let it be thy good pleasure, to give thy grace to the Universities; to bless those whom I have wronged (—); and to forgive those who have wronged me (—): to comfort the disconsolate, to give health and patience to all that are sick and afflicted (—).

Vouchsafe to bless my father and mother with the fear of thy name, that they may be holy in all manner of conversation. Let them remember how short their time is, and be careful to improve every moment of it. O thou who hast kept them from their youth up until now, forsake them not now they are grey-headed, but perfect them in every good word and work, and be thou their Guide unto death. Bless my brothers and sisters, whom thou hast graciously taught the gospel of thy Christ; give them further degrees of illumination, that they may serve thee with a perfect heart and a willing mind. Bless my friends and benefactors, and all who have commended themselves to my prayers (—). Lord, thou best knowest all our conditions, all our desires, all our wants. O do thou suit thy grace and blessings to our several necessities.

Hear, O merciful Father, my supplications, and that for the sake of thy Son Jesus, and bring us, with all those who have pleased thee from the beginning of the world, into the glories of thy Son's kingdom; to whom with thee and the Holy Ghost, be all praise for ever and ever!

Our Father, &c.

FRIDAY EVENING.

Questions relating to Mortification; see before the prayers for Wednesday Evening.

O GOD the FATHER, who canst not be thought to have made me only to destroy me, have mercy upon me.

O God the Son, who knowing thy Father's will, didst come into the world to save me, have mercy upon me.

O God the Holy Ghost, who to the same end hast so

often breathed holy thoughts into me, have mercy upon me.

O holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity, whom in Three Persons I adore as One God, have mercy upon me.

Lord, carest thou not that I perish! Thou that wouldst have all men to be saved! Thou that wouldst have none to perish! and wilt thou now shew thine anger against a worm, a leaf; against a vapour that vanisheth before thee! O remember how short my time is, and deliver not my soul into the power of hell! For, alas, what profit is there in my blood? Or who shall give thee thanks in that pit? No; let me live in thy sight: let me live, O my God, and my soul shall praise thee. Forget me, as I have been disobedient, provoking thee to anger, and regard me as I am distrest, crying out to thee for help. Look not upon me as I am a sinner; but consider me as I am thy creature. A sinner I am, I confess, a sinner of no ordinary stain; but let not this hinder thee, O my God; for upon such sinners thou gettest the greatest glory.

O remember for whose sake it was that thou camest from the bosom of thy Father, and wast content to be born of thine own handmaid. Remember, for whom it was that thy tender body was torn, and scourged, and crucified! was it not for the sins of the whole world? And shall I be so injurious to thy glory, as to think thou hast excepted me? Or, can I think thou diedst only for sinners of a lower kind, and left such as I without a remedy? What had become then of him, who filled Jerusalem with blood? What of her, who lived in a trade of sin? Nay, what had become of thine own disciple, who with oaths and curses thrice denied thee?

O how easy it is for thee to forgive! For it is thy nature. How proper is it for thee to save! For it is thy name. How suitable is it to thy coming into the world! For it is thy business. And when I consider that I am the chief of sinners, may I not urge thee farther, and say, Shall the chief of thy business be left undone? Far be that from thee! Have mercy upon me!

I ask not of thee the things of this world, give them to whom thou pleasest, so thou givest me mercy. O say unto my soul, "Be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee." O that I might never sin against thee more! And wherein-soever my conscience accuses me most, be thou most merciful unto me!

Save me, O God, as a brand snatched out of the fire.

Receive me, O my Saviour, as a sheep that is gone astray, but would now return to the great Shepherd and Bishop of my soul!

FATHER, accept my imperfect repentance, compassionate my infirmities, forgive my wickedness, purify my uncleanness, strengthen my weakness, fix my unstableness, and let thy good Spirit, watch over me for ever, and thy love ever rule in my heart, through the merits, and sufferings, and love of thy Son, in whom thou art always well-pleased.

Give thy grace, O holy Jesus, to all the world, and let all who are redeemed by thy blood acknowledge thee to be the Lord: let all Christians, especially those of this nation, keep themselves unspotted from the world. Let all Governors, and especially our Sovereign, rule with wisdom and justice; and let the Clergy be exemplary in their lives, and discreet and diligent in their labours. Let our Universities enjoy freedom from violence and faction, and excel in true religion and sound learning. Be a help at hand to all that are afflicted, and assist them to trust in thee. Raise up friends for the widow and fatherless, the friendless and oppressed. Give patience to all that are sick, comfort to all troubled consciences, strength to all that are tempted. Be gracious to my relations (—). To all that are endeared to me by their kindnesses and acquaintance, to all who remember me in their prayers, or desire to be remembered in mine (—). Sanctify, O merciful Lord, the friendship which thou hast granted me, with these thy servants (—). O let our prayers be heard for each other, while our hearts are united in thy fear and love, and graciously unite them therein more and more. Strengthen the hearts of us thy servants against all our corruptions and

temptations: enable us to consecrate ourselves faithfully and entirely to thy service. Grant that we may *provoke each other to love*, and serve thee, and grow up together before thee in thy fear and love, to thy heavenly kingdom; and by thy infinite mercies, vouchsafe to bring us with those that are dead in thee, to rejoice together before thee, through the merits of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom with thee and the Holy Ghost, the blessed and only Potentate, the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, be honour and power everlasting.

Our Father, &c.

SATURDAY MORNING.

O GOD, thou great Creator and Sovereign Lord of heaven and earth, thou Father of angels and men, thou Giver of life and Protector of all thy creatures, mercifully accept this my morning sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving which I desire to offer with all humility to thy divine majesty. "Thou art praised, O Lord, by all thy works," and magnified by every thing which thou hast created. The sun rejoiceth to run his course, that he may set forth thy praise who madest him. Nor do the moon and stars refrain to manifest thy glory even amidst the silent night. The earth breathes forth each day perfumes, as incense to thee her sacred King, who hast crowned her with herbs and trees, and beautified her with hills and dales. The deep uttereth her voice, and lifteth up her hands on high to thee, the great Creator, the universal King, the everlasting God. The floods clap their hands, and the hills are joyful together before thee: the fruitful vales rejoice and sing thy praise. Thou feedest the innumerable multitude of animals which thou hast created: "these all wait upon thee, and thou givest them their meat in due season." Thou madest light for our comfort, and broughtest forth darkness out of thy treasures, to overshadow the earth, that the living creatures of it might take their rest. "The fire and hail, snow and

vapour, wind and storm, fulfil thy word," and manifest thy glory. Inanimate things declare thee, O Lord of life; and irrational animals demonstrate their wise Creator. Amidst this universal jubilee of nature, suffer not, I beseech thee, the sons of men to be silent; but let the noblest work of thy creation pay thee the noblest sacrifice of praise. O pour thy grace into my heart, that I may worthily magnify thy great and glorious name. Thou hast made me and sent me into the world to do thy work. O assist me to fulfil the end of my creation, and to shew forth thy praise with all diligence, by giving myself up to thy service. "Prosper the work of my hands upon me," O Lord; O prosper thou whatever I shall undertake this day, that it may tend to thy glory, the good of my neighbour, and the salvation of my own soul.

Preserve me from all those snares and temptations which continually solicit me to offend thee. Guide me by thy Holy Spirit in all those places whither thy providence shall lead me this day: and suffer not my communications with the world to dissipate my thoughts, to make me inadvertent to thy presence, or lukewarm in thy service: but let me always walk as in thy sight, and as one who knows this life to be the seed-time to an eternal harvest. Keep me, I beseech thee, undefiled, unblamable, and unreprovable unto the end; and grant, that I may so diligently perform thy will, in that station wherein thou hast been pleased to place me, that I may make my calling and election sure, through Jesus Christ our blessed Lord and Saviour.

Hear, also, O Lord, my prayers for the whole race of mankind, and guide their feet into the way of peace: reform the corruptions of thy Catholic Church, heal her divisions, and restore to her her ancient discipline: give to the Clergy thereof, whether they be Bishops, Priests, or Deacons, grace, as good shepherds to feed the flocks committed to their care. Bless King George and all the Royal Family, and all that are put in authority under him. Let them exceed others as much in goodness as greatness, and be signal instruments of thy glory. Grant that the Univer-

sities, and all other places set apart for thy service, whatsoever is praise-worthy may for ever flourish. Keep, O Lord, all the Nobility, Gentry, and Commons of this land, in constant communion with thy holy Catholic Church, in humble obedience to the King, and in Christian charity one towards another.

In a particular manner, I beseech thee to be gracious to my father and mother, my brothers and sisters, and all my friends and relations. Pardon all their sins, and heal all their infirmities. Give them that share of the blessings of this life, which thou knowest to be the most expedient for them; and thy grace so to use them here, that they may enjoy thee eternally.

With a propitious eye, O gracious Comforter, behold all that are in affliction: let the sighings of the prisoners, the groans of the sick, the prayers of the oppressed, the desire of the poor and needy, come before thee (—). Give unto my enemies (—) grace and pardon, charity to me and love to thee: remove the cloud from their eyes, the stony from their hearts, that they may know and feel what it is to love their neighbour as themselves. And may it please thee to enable me to "love all my enemies, to bless them that now curse me, to do good to them that now hate me, and to pray for those who now despitefully use me and persecute me." Be pleased, O Lord, of thy goodness, shortly to accomplish the number of thine elect, and to hasten thy kingdom; that we, with all thy whole Church, may have our perfect consummation of bliss, through Jesus Christ our Lord, by whom, and with whom, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, all honour and glory be unto thee, O Father Almighty, now and for ever.

Our Father, &c.

SATURDAY EVENING.

Particular Questions relating to Thanksgiving.

1. Have I allotted some time for thanking God for the blessings of the past week?

2. Have I, in order to be the more sensible of them, seriously and deliberately considered the several circumstances that attended them?

3. Have I considered each of them as an obligation to greater love, and, consequently, to stricter holiness?

O MOST great and glorious GOD, who art mighty in thy power, and wonderful in thy doings towards the sons of men, accept, I beseech thee, my unfeigned thanks and praise, for my creation, preservation, and all the other blessings which, in the riches of thy mercy, thou hast from time to time poured down upon me. "Thou, LORD, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of thine hand." Thou createst the sun and moon, the day and night, and makest the outgoings of the morning and evening to praise thee. Thou "formedst man of the dust of the ground, and breathedst into him the breath of life." In thine own image madest thou him, capable of knowing and loving thee eternally. His nature was perfect, thy will was his law, and thy blessed self his portion. Neither after he had left his first estate didst thou utterly withdraw thy mercy from him; but in every succeeding generation, didst save, deliver, assist, and protect him. Thou hast instructed us by thy laws, and enlightened us by thy statutes. Thou hast redeemed us by the blood of thy Son, and sanctifiest us by the grace of thy Holy Spirit. For these and all thy other mercies, how can I ever sufficiently love thee, or worthily magnify thy great and glorious name? All the powers of my soul are too few to conceive the thanks that are due to thee, even for vouchsafing me the honour of now appearing before thee and conversing with thee.

But thou hast declared thou wilt accept the sacrifice of thanksgiving, in return for thy goodness. For ever therefore will I bless thee, will I adore thy power, and magnify thy goodness: "My tongue shall sing of thy righteousness, and be telling of thy salvation from day to day." I will give thanks unto thee for ever and ever; I will praise my

God while I have my being. O that I had the heart of the seraphim, that I might burn with love like their's! But though I am upon earth, yet will I praise, as I can, the King of heaven; though I am a feeble, mortal creature, yet will I join my song with those that excel in strength, with the immortal hosts of angels and archangels, thrones, dominions, and powers, while they laud and magnify thy glorious name, and sing with incessant shouts of praise.

Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts! Heaven and earth are full of his glory! Glory be to thee, O Lord Most High. *Amen. Hallelujah.*

Accept, O merciful FATHER, my most humble thanks, for thy preservation of me this day (—). O continue thy loving-kindness towards me, and take me into thy protection this night. Let thy holy angels watch over me to defend me from the attempts of evil men and evil spirits. Let me rest in peace, and not sleep in sin, and grant that I may rise more fit for thy service.

O thou, whose kingdom ruleth over all, rule in the hearts of all the men whom thou hast made: reform the corruptions, and heal the breaches of thy holy Church, and establish her in truth and peace. Be gracious unto all Priests and Deacons, and give them rightly to divide the word of truth. Forgive the sins of this nation, and turn our hearts, that iniquity may not be our ruin. Bless King George and all the Royal Family, with all those blessings which thou seest to be most expedient for them; and give to his Council, and to the Nobility and Magistracy, grace, truly to serve thee in their several stations. Bless our Universities, that they may be the great bulwarks of thy faith and love, against all the assaults of vice and infidelity: may the Gentry and Commons of this realm, live in constant communion with thy Church, in obedience to the King, and in love one towards another.

Be gracious to all who are near and dear to me. Thou knowest their names and art acquainted with their wants. Of thy goodness, be pleased to proportion thy blessings to their necessities. Pardon my enemies, and give them

repentance and charity, and me grace to overcome evil with good. Have compassion on all who are distrest in mind, body, or estate; give them steady patience and timely deliverance.

"O Lord, thou God of spirits and of all flesh, be mindful of thy faithful, from Abel the just even unto this day."* And for thy Son's sake give to them and us, in thy due time, a happy resurrection, and a glorious rest at thy right hand for evermore!

Now, to God the Father, who first loved us, and made us accepted in the Beloved: to God the Son, who loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood: to God the Holy Ghost, who sheddeth the love of God abroad in our hearts, be all love and all glory in time and to all eternity. *Amen.*

* The words of the ancient LITURGY, commonly called St. Mark's.

A

COLLECTION

OF

PRAYERS,

FOR

FAMILIES.

SUNDAY MORNING.

ALMIGHTY and ETERNAL GOD, we desire to praise thy holy Name, for so graciously raising us up, in soundness of body and mind, to see the light of this day.

We bless thee in behalf of all thy creatures; for "the eyes of all look unto thee, and thou givest them their meat in due season." But above all, we acknowledge thy inestimable benefits bestowed upon mankind in Christ Jesus. We thank thee for his miraculous birth, for his most holy life, his bitter agony and bloody death, for his glorious resurrection on this day, his ascension into heaven, his triumph over all the powers of darkness, and his sitting at thy right hand for evermore.

O God, how great was thy love to the sinful sons of men, to give "thy only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him, might not perish, but have everlasting life!" How great was that love, which hath committed our souls to one so "mighty to save!" Which hath chosen us to be thy sons and heirs together with Christ Jesus, and set such a High Priest over thy house and family, to make intercession for us, to pour thy blessings upon us, and to

send forth his angels "to minister unto them who shall be heirs of salvation!" O the riches of thy grace, in sending the Holy Spirit, to make us "abound in hope," that we shall one day rise from the dead, and after our short labours here, rest with thee in thy eternal glory.

O that we could begin this day in devout meditations, in joy unspeakable, and in blessing and praising thee, who hast given us such good hope and everlasting consolation! Lift up our minds above all these little things below, which are apt to distract our thoughts; and keep them above till our hearts are fully bent to seek thee every day, in the way wherein Jesus hath gone before us, though it should be with the loss of all we here possess.

We are ashamed, O LORD, to think that ever we have disobeyed thee, who hast redeemed us by the precious blood of thine own Son. O that we may agree with thy Will in all things for the time to come! And that all the powers of our souls and bodies may be wholly dedicated to thy service? We desire unfeignedly that all the thoughts and designs of our minds, all the affections and tempers of our life, may be pure, holy, and unreprovable in thy sight.

"Search us, O LORD, and prove us; try out our reins and our heart. Look well if there be any way of wickedness in us, and lead us in the way everlasting. Let thy favour be better to us than life itself: that so in all things we may approve our hearts before thee, and feel the sense of thy acceptance of us, giving us a joy which the world cannot give.

Make it our delight to praise thee, to call to mind thy loving kindness, and to offer the sacrifice of thanksgiving. Help us to take "heed to ourselves, lest at any time our hearts be overcharged with surfeiting or drunkenness, or the cares of this life: to have our conversation without covetousness, and to be content with such things as we have: to possess our bodies in sanctification and honour: to love our neighbour as ourselves; and as we would that others should do unto us, to do even so to them: to live

peaceably as much as lieth in us, with all men: to put on the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit: and to take those who have spoken in the name of our Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience; and when we suffer as Christians, not to be ashamed, but to glorify thee our God on this behalf."

And accept, good Lord, of all the praises of all thy people met together this day. O that "thy ways were known upon all the earth, and thy saving health among all nations!" And that all Christian kings, especially, may be filled with thy Holy Spirit, and be faithful subjects of the Lord Jesus, "the King of kings, and Lord of lords." O that thy "priests may be clothed with righteousness, and thy saints rejoice and sing:" That all who are in distress may trust in thee, the "health of their countenance and their God." O Lord, hear us, and make thy face to shine upon thy servants, that we may "enter into thy gates with thanksgiving, and into thy courts with praise;" that we may be thankful unto thee, and bless thy name, Amen, for Jesus Christ's sake, in whose words we conclude our imperfect prayers, saying, "Our Father," &c.

SUNDAY EVENING.

O THOU "High and Holy ONE, that inhabitest Eternity," thou art to be feared and loved by all thy servants. "All thy works praise thee, O God;" and we especially give thanks unto thee, for thy marvellous love in Christ Jesus, by whom thou hast "reconciled the world to thyself." Thou hast "given us exceeding great and precious promises." Thou hast sealed them with his blood. Thou hast confirmed them by his resurrection and ascension, and the coming of the Holy Ghost. We thank thee, that thou hast given us so many happy opportunities of knowing "the truth as it is in Jesus," even the mystery which was hid from ages and generations, but is now revealed to them that believe.

Blessed be thy goodness for that great consolation, and

for the assistance of the Holy Spirit. Blessed be thy goodness, that we have felt it so often in our heart, inspiring us with holy thoughts, filling us with love, and joy, and comfortable expectations of "the glory that shall be revealed." We thank thee, that thou hast suffered us this day to attend on thee in thy public service, and that we have begun in any measure that eternal "rest which remaineth for the people of God."

We offer up again our souls and bodies to thee, to be governed, not by our own will, but thine. O let it be ever the ease and joy of our heart, to be under the conduct of thy unerring wisdom, to follow thy counsels, and to be ruled in all things by thy holy will. And let us never distrust thy abundant kindness and tender care over us, whatsoever it is thou wouldst have us to do or to suffer in this world.

O God, purify our hearts, that we may entirely love thee, and rejoice in being loved of thee; that we may confide in thee, and absolutely resign ourselves to thee, and be filled with constant devotion toward thee. O that we may never sink into a base love of any thing here below, nor be oppressed with the cares of this life: but assist us to "abhor that which is evil, and cleave to that which is good." Let us "use this world as not abusing it." Give us true humility of spirit, that we may "not think of ourselves more highly than we ought to think." Keep us from "being wise in our own conceits. Let our moderation be known to all men." Make us "kindly-affectioned one to another;" to delight in doing good; to "shew all meekness to all men; to render unto all their dues, tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom, fear to whom fear, honour to whom honour;" and to "owe no man any thing, but to love one another." Make us so happy, that we may be able to "love our enemies, to bless those that curse us, to do good to them that hate us; to rejoice with them that do rejoice, and to weep with them that weep." Compose our spirits to a quiet and steady dependence on thy good providence, that we may "take no thought for our life, nor be careful for any thing, but by prayer and

supplication, with thanksgiving, still make known our requests to thee our God."—And help us to "pray always and not faint; in every thing to give thanks, and offer up the sacrifice of praise continually; to rejoice in hope of thy glory: to possess our souls in patience: and to learn in whatsoever state we are, therewith to be content." Make us "know both how to be abased, and how to abound; every where, and in all things," instruct us both "to abound and suffer want," being enabled "to do all things through Christ who strengtheneth us."

O that the light of all Christians did so "shine before men," that others might "glorify thee our Father which art in heaven; and send forth thy light and thy truth, (into all the dark corners of the earth,) that all kings may fall down before thee, and all nations do thee service!" Bless these kingdoms, and give us grace at length to "bring forth fruits meet for repentance." O Lord, save the King, and "establish his throne in righteousness." Prosper the endeavours of all those who faithfully feed thy people, and increase the number of them. O that the seed which hath been sown this day, may take deep root in all our hearts: that being "not forgetful hearers, but doers of the word, we may be blessed in our deeds." Help us in all this week following, to "set a watch before our mouth, and keep the door of our lips." And "let not our hearts incline to any evil thing, or to practise wicked works with men that work iniquity." But "as we have received how we ought to walk and to please thee, so we may abound more and more."

Protect us, we beseech thee, and all our friends every where, this night, and awaken in the morning those good thoughts in our hearts, that the "words of our Saviour may abide in us, and we in him;" who hath taught us when we pray, to say, "Our Father," &c.

MONDAY MORNING.

WE humble ourselves, O Lord of heaven and earth, before thy glorious Majesty. We acknowledge thy eternal

power, wisdom, goodness, and truth: and desire to render thee most unfeigned thanks, for all the benefits which thou pourest upon us. But above all, for thine inestimable love in the redemption of the world, by our Lord Jesus Christ.

We implore thy tender mercies, in the forgiveness of all our sins, whereby we have offended either in thought, word, or deed. We desire to be truly sorry for all our misdoings, and utterly to renounce whatsoever is contrary to thy will. We desire to devote our whole man, body, soul, and spirit, to thee. And as thou dost inspire us with these desires, so accompany them always with thy grace, that we may, every day, with our whole hearts, give ourselves up to thy service.

We desire to be so holy and undefiled as our blessed Master was. And we trust thou wilt fulfil all the gracious promises which he hath made to us. Let them be dearer to us than thousands of gold and silver; let them be the comfort and joy of our hearts. We ask nothing, but that it may be unto thy servants according to his word.

Thou hast mercifully kept us the last night: blessed be thy continued goodness. Receive us likewise into thy protection this day. Guide and assist us in all our thoughts, words, and actions. Make us willing to do and suffer what thou pleasest: waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, unto eternal life.

Blessed be thy goodness, which hast not suffered us to wander, without instruction, after the foolish desires of our own hearts: but hast clearly shewn us where our happiness lies. O may we receive with all thankfulness, those holy words which teach us the blessedness of poverty of spirit, of mourning after thee, of meekness and gentleness, of hungering and thirsting after righteousness, of mercifulness, and purity of heart, of doing good unto all, and patiently suffering for doing the will of our Lord Jesus Christ.

O may we always be in the number of those blessed souls! May we ever feel ourselves happy in having the kingdom of God within us, in the comforts of the Holy One, in being filled with all the fruits of righteousness, in being

made the children of the Highest, and above all, in seeing thee our God. Let us abound in thy love more and more; and in continual prayers and praises to thee, the Father of mercies, and God of all consolation, in Jesus Christ our Lord.

And we desire, thou knowest, the good of all mankind, especially of all Christian people; that they may all walk worthy of the gospel, and live together in unity and Christian love. For which end we pray that all Christian kings, princes, and governors, may be wise, pious, just, and merciful, and endeavouring that all their subjects may lead peaceful lives in all godliness and honesty: And more particularly, that our Sovereign King George may be blessed with a religious, quiet, long, and prosperous reign, and that all in authority under him may seek in their several stations to right the oppressed, to comfort the afflicted, to provide for the poor and needy, and to relieve all those that are in any misery. Bless all those that watch over our souls; succeed their labours, and give us grace to follow their godly admonitions, and "to esteem them very highly in love for their works' sake."—The same blessings we crave for our friends, relations, and acquaintance, that we may all live in perfect love and peace together, and rejoice together at the great day of the Lord Jesus; in whose holy words we sum up all our wants: "Our Father," &c.

MONDAY EVENING.

ALMIGHTY and most merciful FATHER, in whom we live, move, and have our being: to whose tender compassions we owe our safety the day that is past, together with all the comforts of this life, and the hopes of that which is to come. We praise thee, O Lord, we bow ourselves before thee, acknowledging we have nothing but what we receive from thee, "unto thee do we give thanks," O God, who daily pourest thy benefits upon us.

Blessed be thy goodness for our health, for our food and raiment, for our peace and safety, for the love of our friends, for all our blessings in this life; and our desire to attain

that life which is immortal. Blessed be thy love, for that we feel in our hearts any motion towards thee. Behold, O Lord, we present ourselves before thee, to be inspired with such a vigorous sense of thy love, as may put us forward with a greater earnestness, zeal, and diligence, in all our duty. Renew in us, we beseech thee, a lively image of thee, in all righteousness, purity, mercy, faithfulness, and truth. O that Jesus, the hope of glory, may be formed in us, in all humility, meekness, patience, and an absolute surrender of our souls and bodies to thy holy will; that "we may not live, but Christ may live in us;" that every one of us may say, "The life I now live in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."

Let the remembrance of his love, who made himself an offering for our sins, be ever dear and precious to us. Let it continually move us to offer up ourselves to thee, to do thy will, as our blessed Master did. May we place an entire confidence in thee, and still trust ourselves with thee, who hast not "spared thine own Son, but freely given him up for us all." May we humbly accept of whatsoever thou sendest us, and in "every thing give thanks." Surely thou "wilt never leave us, nor forsake us." O guide us safe through all the changes of this life, in an unchangeable love to thee, and a lively sense of thy love to us, till we come to live with thee, and enjoy thee for ever.

And now that we are going to lay ourselves down to sleep, take us into thy gracious protection, and settle our spirits in such quiet and delightful thoughts of the glory where our Lord Jesus lives, that we may desire to be dissolved, and to go to him who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we may live together with him.

To thy blessing we recommend all mankind, high and low, rich and poor, that they may all faithfully serve thee, and contentedly enjoy whatsoever is needful for them. And especially, we beseech thee, that the course of this world may be so peaceably ordered by thy governance, that thy church may joyfully serve thee in all godly quietness. We leave all we have with thee, especially our friends, and

those who are dear unto us, desiring that when we are dead and gone, they may lift up their souls in this manner unto thee, and teach those that come after, to praise, love, and obey thee. And if we awake again in the morning, may we praise thee again with joyful lips, and still offer ourselves a more acceptable sacrifice to thee, through Jesus Christ, in whose words we beseech thee to hear us, according to the full sense and meaning thereof, "Our Father." &c.

TUESDAY MORNING.

O MOST great and mighty LORD, the possessor of heaven and earth, all the angels rejoice in blessing and praising thee, the Father of spirits: for "thou hast created all things, and in wisdom hast thou made them all," and spread thy tender mercies over all thy works. We desire thankfully to acknowledge thy bounty to us, among the rest of thy creatures, and thy particular grace, and favour to us, in Jesus Christ, our merciful Redeemer. O give us a deep sense of that love which gave him to die for us, that he might be "the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him."

And hast thou not said, that thou wilt "give thy Holy Spirit to them that ask it?" O Father of mercies, let it be unto us according to thy word. Cherish whatever thou hast already given us, which is acceptable in thy sight. And since at the best we are unprofitable servants, and can do no more than it is our duty to do, enable us to do every thing which thou hast commanded us heartily, with goodwill and true love to thy service.

O that we may ever approach thee with delight, and feel it the joy of our heart, to think of thee, to praise thee, to give thee thanks, and to offer ourselves with absolute resignation to thee. O that mercy may always please us, as it pleaseth thee! That we may be strictly just and righteous! May cheerfully pass by injuries, freely deny ourselves whatever is not for thy glory; willingly submit to thy fatherly corrections, and perform the duties of our several relations

with singleness of heart. Render us so mindful of the great love of our Lord, that we may be zealously concerned for his glory, and use our utmost diligence to promote his religion in the world, delighting to commemorate his death and passion, making a joyful sacrifice of our souls and bodies to him, and earnestly desiring that his kingdom may come over all the earth.

Fulfil, most merciful Lord, all our petitions: and as thou hast graciously protected us this night, so accompany us all this day with thy blessing, that we may please thee in body and soul, and be safe under thy presence, who art very nigh to all those that call upon thee.

And, O that all men may be awakened into a lively and thankful sense of all thy benefits. Stir up especially the minds of all Christian people, to follow "the truth as it is in Jesus, and exercise themselves to have a conscience void of offence towards God and towards man." Bless these kingdoms, and endue our Sovereign with such excellent wisdom and holy zeal, that we may see many go : ys under his government. O that true religion, justice, mercy, brotherly-kindness, and all things else that are praiseworthy, may so flourish among us, that we may enjoy the blessings of peace and plenty, and that there may be no complaining in our streets.

We recommend to thee all our friends and neighbours, all the poor, the sick, and the afflicted, desiring those mercies for them, which we would ask for ourselves, were we in their condition. "O God, whose never-failing providence ordereth all things both in heaven and earth, keep them and us, we beseech thee, from all hurtful things, and give us those things which are profitable for us, according to thine abundant mercy in our Lord Jesus;" in whose words we conclude our supplications unto thee, saying, "Our Father," &c.

TUESDAY EVENING.

ALMIGHTY and everlasting GOD, the sovereign Lord of all creatures in heaven and earth, we acknowledge that ur beings, and all the comforts of them depend on thee, the

Fountain of all Good. We have nothing but what is owing entirely to thy free and bounteous love, O most blessed Redeemer!

To thee therefore be given by us, and by all creatures whom thou hast made, to know how great and good thou art, all honour and praise, all love and obedience, as long as we have any being. "It is but meet, right, and our bounden duty, that we should at all times, and in all places, give thanks unto thee," O Lord, and devoutly resign both soul and body to thee, to be absolutely governed and ruled according to thy holy will.

Further, we pray thee increase every good desire which we feel already in our hearts; let us always live as becomes thy creatures, as becomes the disciples of Jesus Christ. Incline us to be more and more in love with thy laws, till they are written upon our hearts. Stir up our wills to *love them exceedingly*, and to cleave unto them as our very life.

O that we might heartily surrender our wills to thine! that we may unchangeably cleave unto it, with the greatest and most entire affection to all thy commands. O that there may abide for ever in us, such a strong and powerful sense of thy mighty love towards us in Christ Jesus, as may constrain us freely and willingly to please thee, in the constant exercise of righteousness and mercy, temperance and charity, meekness and patience, truth and fidelity; together with such a humble, contented, and peaceable spirit, as may adorn the religion of our Lord and Master. Yea, let it ever be the joy of our hearts to be righteous, as thou art righteous: to be merciful, as thou our heavenly Father art merciful: to be "holy as thou who hast called us art holy, in all manner of conversation;" to be endued with thy divine wisdom, and to resemble thee in faithfulness and truth. O that the example of our blessed Saviour may be always dear unto us, that we may cheerfully follow him in every holy temper, and delight to do thy will, O God. Let these desires, which thou hast given us, never die or languish in our hearts, but be kept always alive, always in their vigour and force, by the perpetual inspirations of the Holy Ghost,

Accept likewise our thanks for thy merciful preservation of us all this day. We are bold again to commit ourselves unto thee this night. Defend us from all the powers of darkness; and raise up our spirits, together with our bodies, in the morning, to such a vigorous sense of thy continual goodness, as may provoke us all the day long to an unwearied diligence in well-doing.

And the same mercies that we beg for ourselves, we desire for the rest of mankind; especially for those who are called by the name of Christ. O that every one of these may do his duty with fidelity!

That kings may be tender-hearted as the fathers of their countries; and all their subjects may be dutiful and obedient to them as their children: that the pastors of thy Church may feed their flocks with true wisdom and understanding, and all the people may submit unto them, and follow their godly counsels: that the rich and mighty may have compassion on the poor and miserable; and all such distressed people may bless the rich, and rejoice in the prosperity of those that are above them: give to husbands and wives, parents and children, masters and servants, the grace to behave themselves so in their several relations, that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things, and may receive of him a crown of glory: in whose holy name and words we continue to beseech thy grace and mercy towards us, and all thy people every where, saying, "Our Father," &c.

WEDNESDAY MORNING.

O GOD, blessed for ever, we thank and praise thee for all thy benefits, for the comforts of this life, and our hope of everlasting salvation in the life to come. We desire to have a lively sense of thy love always possessing our hearts, that may still constrain us to love thee, to obey thee, to trust in thee, to be content with the portion thy love allots unto us, and to rejoice even in the midst of all the troubles of this life.

Thou "hast delivered thine own Son for us all. How shalt thou not with him also freely give us all things?" We depend upon thee, especially for the grace of thy Holy Spirit. O that we may feel it perpetually bearing us up, by the strength of our most holy faith, above all the temptations that may at any time assault us! That we may keep ourselves unspotted from the world, and may still cleave unto thee in righteousness, in lowliness, purity of heart, yea, the whole mind that was in Christ.

Let thy mighty power enable us to do our duty towards thee, and towards all men, with care, and diligence, and zeal, and perseverance unto the end. Help us to be meek and gentle in our conversation, prudent and discreet in ordering our affairs, observant of thy fatherly providence in every thing that befalls us, thankful for thy benefits, patient under thy chastisements, and readily disposed for every good word and work. Preserve in us a constant remembrance of thy all-seeing eye: of thy inestimable love in Jesus Christ, whereof thou hast given us so many pledges, and of the great account we must give to him at the day of his appearing; that so we may continue steadfast and immovable, and be abundant in the work of the Lord, knowing that our labour shall not be in vain in the Lord.

Deliver us, we beseech thee, from worldly cares and foolish desires; from vain hopes and causeless fears; and so dispose our hearts, that death itself may not be dreadful to us, but we may welcome it with a cheerful countenance, when and howsoever it shall approach.

O that our hearts may be so firmly established in grace, that nothing may affright us or shake our constancy, but we may rather chuse to die than to dishonour him, who died for us! We resign ourselves to thy wisdom and goodness who knowest what is best for us; believing thou wilt "never suffer us to be tempted above what we are able, and wilt with the temptation also make a way to escape, that we may be able to bear it."

We commend unto thee all mankind, especially thy

church, and more particularly these kingdoms, that we may all believe in our Lord Jesus Christ, and be zealous of good works. Bless our Sovereign, his Counsellors, his Ministers, and all employed in public business, whether spiritual or civil, that whatsoever they do may be for thy glory, and the public good. Be gracious unto all that are near and dear unto us, and keep us all in thy fear and love. Guide us, good Lord, and govern us by the same Spirit, that we may be so united to thee here, as not to be divided when thou art pleased to call us hence, but may together enter into thy glory, to dwell with thee in love and joy that shall never die, through Jesus Christ our blessed Lord and Saviour, who hath taught us when we pray, to say, "Our Father," &c.

WEDNESDAY EVENING.

O LORD, "how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all. The day is thine; the night also is thine; thou hast prepared the light and the sun." We render thee thanks for all the benefits which thou hast bestowed on the whole world: especially on us, whom thou hast called to the knowledge of thy grace in Christ Jesus. It is a marvellous love wherewith thou hast loved us. Thou hast not dealt so with all people: and as for thy great and precious promises, they have not known them.

Accept, O merciful FATHER, the good resolutions which thou hast inspired us with by thy Spirit. Strengthen them, we beseech thee, with thy continued grace, that no sudden desires, vehement inclinations, ineffectual purposes, no, nor partial performances, may lead us into a false opinion of ourselves: but that we may bring forth actually, and with a constant spirit all the fruits of righteousness, which are by Christ Jesus.

Deny not, O LORD, the desires of those souls, who would offer up themselves entirety to thy service. But preserve us always in seriousness of spirit. Let the sense of our weakness make us watchful and diligent, the sense of our former negligence excite us to be fervent in spirit, and the goodness of thy commands render us fruitful and

abundant in the work of the Lord. O that all our pious affections may be turned into actions of piety and holiness: and may all our actions be spirited with zeal, and all our zeal regulated with prudence, and our prudence void of all guile, and joined with perfect integrity of heart: that adorning our most holy faith here, by an upright, charitable, and discreet conversation, we may receive praise in the day of the Lord, and be numbered with thy saints in glory everlasting.

O lift up our affections to things above, that we may have perfect contentment in well-doing and patient suffering, and the good hope we have of being eternally beloved of thee, may make us rejoice evermore. Free us from the cares of the world, from all distrust of thy good providence, from repining at any thing that befalls us; and enable us in every thing to give thanks, believing that all things are ordered wisely, and shall work together for our good.

Into thy hands we commend both our souls and bodies which thou hast mercifully preserved this day. We trust in thy watchful providence, who "givest thy angels charge over us, who art about our beds, and about our paths, and spiest out all our thoughts." O continue these holy thoughts and desires in us till we fall asleep, that we may receive the light of the morning, if thou prolongest our lives, with a new joy in thee, and thankful affection to thee.

We desire, likewise, O God, the good of the whole world. Pity the follies of mankind; deliver them from their miseries, and forgive thou all their sins. Hear the groans of every part of the creation, that is yet "subject to bondage," and bring them all "into the glorious liberty of the sons of God." Hear the daily prayers of the Catholic Church. Free her from all foul and dividing errors; let the truth, as it is in Jesus, prevail, and "peace be in all her borders." O that all Christian governors may "seek peace and ensue it!" Make thy ministers the messengers of peace, and dispose all who are called Christians, to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Enlighten the minds of all Jews, Turks, and Infidels.

Strengthen all thy faithful servants. Bring back them that wander out of the way: raise up those that are fallen: confirm those that stand, and grant them steadily to persevere in faith, love, and obedience. Relieve and comfort all that are in distress. Let the earth bring forth her fruit in due season: and let all honest and industrious people be blest in their labours.

Remember all those who have done good unto us, and reward them seven-fold into their bosom. Grant forgiveness and charity to all our enemies; and continue good-will among all our neighbours. Support the sick with faith and patience; assist those who are leaving this world. Receive the souls which thou hast redeemed with thy Son's precious blood, and sanctified by the Holy Spirit. And give us all a glorious resurrection and eternal life. "Our Father," &c.

THURSDAY MORNING.

O LORD, the GOD of our Salvation, "thou art the hope of all the ends of the earth." Upon thee the eyes of all do wait; for thou givest unto all life, and breath, and all things. Thou still watchest over us for good: thou daily renewest to us our lives and thy mercies: and thou hast given us the assurance of thy word, that if we commit our affairs to thee, if we acknowledge thee in all our ways, thou wilt direct our paths. We desire, O Lord, to be still under thy gracious conduct and fatherly protection. We beg the guidance and help of thy good Spirit, to choose our inheritance for us, and to dispose of us, and all that concerns us, to the glory of thy name.

O LORD, withdraw not thy tender mercies from us, nor the comforts of thy presence! Never punish our past sins, by giving us over to the power of our sins: but pardon all our sins, and save us from all our iniquities. And grant us, O good God, the continual sense of thy gracious acceptance of us, in the Son of thy Love, that our souls may bless thee, and "all that is within us may praise thy holy name."

And, O that we may find the joy of the Lord to be our strength; to defend us from all our sins, and to make us more zealous of every good work: that herein we may "exercise ourselves, to have a conscience void of offence both towards God and towards men." O help us to "walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, carefully redeeming the time," improving all those seasons and means of grace, which thou art pleased to put into our hands. Sanctify to us all our employments in the world: our crosses also and our comforts; all the estates we go through, and all the events that befall us, till, through the merits of thy Son, and the multitude of thy mercies, we are conducted safe, to "be ever with the Lord."

Thou "hast laid help for us upon one that is mighty!" that is "able to save unto the uttermost all those that come unto God through him." Through him thou hast encouraged us to come boldly, that we "may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." Help us, we beseech thee, to demean ourselves as becomes the children of God, the redeemed of the Lord, the members of Christ. Put thy Spirit within us, causing us to walk in thy statutes, and to keep thy judgments, and do them. Yea, let it be our meat and drink to do thy will, and to run the way of thy commandments.

O gracious Father, keep us, we pray thee, this day in thy fear and favour, and teach us, in all our thoughts, words, and works, to live to thy glory. If thou guide us not, we go astray; if thou uphold us not, we fall. O let thy good providence be our defence, and thy good Spirit our guide, and counsellor, and supporter in all our ways. And grant that we may do always what is acceptable in thy sight, through Jesus Christ our Lord: in whose holy name and words we close these our imperfect prayers: "Our Father," &c.

Let thy grace, O Lord Jesus; thy love, O heavenly Father; and thy comfortable fellowship, O blessed Spirit, be with us, and all that desire our prayers, this day and for evermore.

THURSDAY EVENING.

O LORD our GOD, thy glory is above all our thoughts, and thy mercy is over all thy works. We are still living monuments of thy mercy. For thou hast not cut us off in our sins, but still givest us a good hope and strong consolation through grace. Thou hast sent thy only Son into the world, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish in his sins, but have everlasting life. O Lord, we believe; help our unbelief; and give us the true repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ; that we may be in the number of those who do indeed repent and believe to the saving of the soul. Being justified by faith, let us have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, let us rejoice in him, through whom we have now redemption in his blood: and let the love of God be shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

And as we pray that thou wilt be to us a Father of mercies, and a God of consolation, so that thou wilt make us "followers of God as dear children," ever jealous over our hearts, and watchful over our ways; continually fearing to offend and endeavouring to please thee. Thou knowest, O Lord, all our temptations, and the sin that doth so easily beset us. Thou knowest the devices of the enemy, and the deceitfulness of our own hearts. We pray thee, good Lord, that thou wilt arm us with the whole armour of God. Uphold us with thy free Spirit, and watch over us for good evermore.

Let our supplications also ascend before thee, for the whole race of mankind. Send thy word unto all the ends of the earth, and let it be the savour of life unto all that hear it. Be gracious to this our native land. O do thou rule all our rulers, counsel all our counsellors, teach all our teachers, and order all the public affairs to thy glory. Turn from us the judgments which we feel or fear; continue thy blessings to our souls and bodies. And notwithstanding all our provocations, be thou still our God, and

let us be thy people. Have compassion on all the children of affliction, and sanctify thy fatherly corrections to them. Be gracious to all our friends and neighbours. Reward our benefactors. Bless our relations with the best of thy blessings, with thy fear and love. Preserve us from our enemies, and reconcile them both to us and to thyself. O that all the habitations of Christians may be the houses of prayer! and be thou especially kind to the several families where thy blessed name is called upon. Let thy blessing rest upon us of this family. Bless all our present estates to us, and fit us all for whatsoever thou shalt be pleased to call us to. O teach us "how to want, and how to abound." In every condition secure our hearts to thyself, and make us ever to approve ourselves sincere and faithful in thy service.

And now, O Father of mercies, be pleased to accept our evening sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. O that thou wouldest imprint and preserve upon our hearts, a lively sense of all thy kindness to us, that our souls may bless thee, and all that is within us may praise thy holy name. Yea, let us give thee thanks from the ground of the heart, and praise our God while we have our being; for all thy patience with us, thy care over us, and thy continual mercy to us, blessed be thy name, O Lord God, our heavenly Father. And unto Thee, with the Son of thy love, and the Spirit of grace, be all thanks and praise now and for evermore.

FRIDAY MORNING.

O LORD GOD, "merciful, gracious, and long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth! thou keepest mercy for thousands; thou pardonest iniquity, and transgression, and sin. How excellent is thy loving-kindness, O God! the children of men shall put their trust under the shadow of thy wings!" And therefore do we still look up to that bountiful Hand, from whence we have received all

our good things. O Lord our God, be favourable unto us, as thou usest to be unto those that love thy name! O look not upon the sin of our nature, nor the sins of our hearts and lives, which are more than we can remember, and greater than we can express. It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because thy compassions fail not. But thou lookest upon the face of thine anointed, who was manifested to take away our sins; by whom it is that we have access to the Majesty on high.

O God, be merciful to us miserable sinners, for his sake whom "thou hast exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance unto thy people and forgiveness of sins." Be merciful, O God, be merciful unto our souls which have greatly sinned. O heal our backslidings: renew us to repentance. Establish our hearts in thy fear and love; and establish our goings in thy way, that our footsteps slip not. Let us waver no more: let us never more be weary or faint in our minds. Let us not revolt from thee, or turn to folly again, after thou hast spoken peace to our souls: but may we go on conquering and to conquer all the enemies of our souls, and all the hindrances of our salvation, till thou hast bruised Satan under our feet.

Seeing there is in Christ Jesus an infinite fulness of all that we can want or wish, O that we may all receive of his fulness, grace upon grace; grace to pardon our sins and subdue our iniquities: to justify our persons, and to sanctify our souls: and to complete that holy change, that renewal of our heart, whereby we may be transformed into that blessed image wherein thou didst create us. O make us all meet to be partakers of the inheritance of thy saints in light.

And teach us, O God, to use this world, without abusing it; and to receive the things needful for the body, without losing our part in thy love, which is better than life itself. Whatever we have of this world, O may we have the same with thy leave and love, sanctified to us by the word of God and by prayer; and by the right improvement thereof to thy glory. And whatever we want of worldly things, leave

us not destitute of the "things that accompany salvation;" but adorn our souls with all such graces of thy Holy Spirit, that we may adorn the doctrine of our God and Saviour in all things.

And now that thou hast renewed our lives and thy mercies to us this morning, help us to renew our desires, and resolutions, and endeavours to live in obedience to thy holy will. O restrain us from the sins into which we are most prone to fall, and quicken us to the duties we are most averse to perform. And grant that we may think and speak, and will and do, the things becoming the children of our heavenly Father: and so find the strong consolation of thy gracious acceptance in Jesus Christ our Saviour: Who, when we pray, hath taught us to say, "Our Father," &c.

FRIDAY EVENING.

O LORD, thou wast before all, thou art above all, and thy years shall not fail. Thou art the Searcher of our hearts. Thou knowest the dulness and hardness, the vanity and deceitfulness of them. We were born sinners, and so we have lived. We have added sin to sin. We have abused thy great and manifold mercies, tempted thy patience, and despised thy goodness. And justly mightest thou have cast us into outer darkness, where is wailing and gnashing of teeth.

But of thy loving kindnesses there is no number. Thou still callest us to return to thee: and "whosoever cometh unto thee, thou wilt in no wise cast out." O meet us with thy heavenly grace, that we may be able to come to thee. Be thou graciously pleased to stretch forth thy hand, and loose the chains wherewith our souls are entangled. O free us from every weight of sin, from every yoke of bondage. O help us to feel, and bewail, and forsake all our sins. And let us never want the comfortable assurance of thy forgiveness of them, thy acceptance of us, and thy love to us, in the blessed Son of thy eternal love. Thou art never

weary, O Lord, of doing us good. Let us never be weary of doing thee service. But as thou hast pleasure in the prosperity of thy servants, so let us take pleasure in the service of our Lord, and abound in thy work, and in thy love and praise evermore. O fill up all that is wanting, reform whatever is amiss in us, and perfect the thing that concerneth us. Let the witness of thy pardoning love ever abide in all our hearts. O speak into every one of our souls the peace which passeth all understanding: and let us always look upon thee as our Father, reconciled to us in Jesus Christ.

In his great name we cry unto thee in the behalf of the whole race of mankind. O that all the ends of the earth may see the salvation of our God. Continue thy mercies to this sinful land; teach us, at length, to know thy will concerning us: and, O turn thou all our hearts unto thee, as the heart of one man. Bless the King; O Lord, prolong his days and prosper his government; make him always a "terror to evil-doers, and a praise to them that do well." And grant unto all magistrates and ministers of thy word, a continual supply of all the needful gifts and graces of thy Holy Spirit. Be thou a father to the fatherless, a husband to the widow, a refuge to the oppressed, a physician to the sick, a helper to the friendless, a God of consolation to the sorrowful and distressed.—Bless to us whatsoever thou art pleased to allot to us, and every thing that befalls us. May all work together for good, to build us up in thy grace, and to help us on to thy glory.

Continue thy fatherly care over us this night. O preserve and defend, and bless and keep us, that no evil may befall us, "nor any plague come nigh our dwelling." Give us comfortable sleep to strengthen us for thy service. And whenever thou callest us to the sleep of death, let us cheerfully resign our spirits into thy hands, through the riches of thy grace, and the worthiness of thy Son, in whose merits and mediation alone we put our trust. And for all that he hath done and suffered for us, to thy name, O blessed God of our salvation, be the praise, and honour,

and glory, given by us and all thy people, now and for evermore. "Our Father," &c.

SATURDAY MORNING.

WE present ourselves before thee, O LORD our GOD, to pay our tribute of praise and thanksgiving; desiring thee mercifully to accept us and our services, at the hands of Jesus Christ. In his great name we come to beg thy pardon and peace, the increase of thy grace, and tokens of thy love. For we are not worthy the least of thy mercies. But worthy is the Lamb that was slain to take away the sin of the world, for whose sake thou wilt give us all things. For he hath fulfilled those holy laws which we had broken, and perfectly satisfied for our offences. And in him thou art a God gracious and merciful to those who deserve nothing but punishment.

O merciful FATHER, regard not what we have done *against thee:* but what our blessed Saviour hath done *for us.* Regard not what we have made ourselves; but what he is made unto us of thee our God. O that Christ may be in every one of our souls, "wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption!" That his precious *blood* may "cleanse us from all our sins:" and that thy Holy Spirit may renew and sanctify our souls. May he crucify our flesh with its affections and lusts, and mortify all our members which are upon earth. O let not "sin reign in our mortal bodies, that we should obey it in the lusts thereof: but being made free from sin, let us be the servants of righteousness." Let us approve our hearts to thee, and let all our ways be pleasing in thy sight.

O teach us to know thee, O God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent. And enable us to do thy will on earth, as it is done in heaven. Give us to fear thee and to love thee, to trust and to delight in thee, and to cleave to thee with full purpose of heart, that no temptations may draw or

drive us from thee; but that all thy dispensations towards us, and thy dealings with us may be the messengers of thy love to our souls. Quicken us, O Lord, in our dulness, that we may not serve thee in a lifeless, and listless manner; but may abound in thy work, and be fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. And make us faithful in all our intercourse with our neighbour, that we may be ready to do good and bear evil; that we may be just and kind, merciful and meek, peaceable and patient, sober and temperate, humble and self-denying, inoffensive and useful in the world; that so glorifying thee here, we may be glorified with thee in thy heavenly kingdom.

Day by day we magnify thee, O Lord, who makest every day an addition to thy mercies. We bless thee for preserving us the night past, and for the rest thou gavest us therein. O cause us to hear thy loving-kindness in the morning; for in thee do we trust. Cause us to know the way wherein we shall go, for we lift up our souls unto thee. O take not thy Holy Spirit from us; but direct all our ways to please thee our God. Help us to see thy power, to own thy presence, to admire thy wisdom, and to love thy goodness in all thy creatures; and by all, draw our hearts still nearer to thee. Such mercy and grace we beg for ourselves, and all ours and thine every where, in our great Mediator's blessed words: "Our Father," &c.

SATURDAY EVENING.

O LORD, our GOD, thou art infinitely good, and thou hast showed us what is good. Thou sendest out thy light and thy truth that they may guide us, and makest plain thy way before our face. Thou givest us many opportunities and advantages to quicken and further us in thy service. We have "line upon line, and precept upon precept;" thy messengers early and late, to open and apply thy word, to call and warn, to direct and exhort us with all long-suffering. But how little have we improved all the precious talents, which thou hast put into our hands! O Lord, thou

mightest justly take away the gospel of thy kingdom from us, and give it unto other people, who would bring forth the fruits thereof. Because thou hast called and we refused, thou hast stretched forth thy hands and we have not regarded, thou mightest leave us to our own perverseness and impenitence, till our iniquities become our ruin.

But, O Lord God, enter not thus into judgment with thy servants. Pardon all our contempt of thy word, and our not profiting thereby. And help us for the time to come, better to improve the blessed opportunities set before us. "As the rain descends from heaven and returns not thither, but waters the earth, and maketh it fruitful, so let not thy word return unto thee void, but prosper in the work whereunto thou sendest it." O make it effectual to build us all up in the true fear and love of God, and in the knowledge and faith of our Lord Jesus Christ.

O gracious God, may thy Spirit cause thy word to work thoroughly and successfully in all our hearts. And as we daily "receive, how we ought to walk and to please thee our God;" so help us to "walk worthy of the Lord unto all well-pleasing;" increasing in the knowledge and love of thee, abounding more and more in every good thing which is pleasing in thy sight, through Jesus Christ.

At his hands, O Lord our God, we beg thy gracious acceptance of our humble praise and thanksgiving, for all thy blessings, spiritual and temporal, so freely conferred upon us. We praise thee for all the comforts and conveniences of this life, and for all the means and hope of a better; particularly for what we have received this day; the food of our souls set before us; the word of salvation sounding in our ears, and the Spirit of God striving with our hearts. O withdraw not thy tender mercies from us, but still continue thy accustomed goodness, and increase thy grace and heavenly blessings upon us, and rejoice over us to do us good.

In mercy pass by all which thy most pure and holy eyes have seen amiss in us this day. Forgive the iniquities of our holy things: overlook all our sins and failings, through

our great Mediator and Redeemer, who ever lives at thy right hand to make intercession for us. And for Jesus Christ, and for all which thou art pleased to give us together with him, "not unto us, O Lord, but unto thy name" be all the praise, and honour, and glory humbly ascribed by us, and all thy Church, now and for evermore. "Our Father," &c.

PRAYERS

FOR

CHILDREN.

PREFACE.

MY DEAR CHILD,

A LOVER of your Soul has here drawn up a few Prayers, in order to assist you in that great duty. Be sure that you do not omit, at least morning and evening, to present yourself upon your knees before God. You have mercies to pray for, and blessings to praise God for. But take care that you do not mock God, drawing near with your lips, while your heart is far from him. God sees you, and knows your thoughts: therefore see that you not only speak with your lips, but pray with your heart. And that you may not ask in vain, see that you forsake sin, and make it your endeavour to do what God has shewn you ought: because God says, "The prayers of the wicked are an abomination unto the Lord." Ask then of God for the blessings you want, in the name, and for the sake of Jesus Christ, and God will hear and answer you, and do more for you than you can either ask or think. JOHN WESLEY.

MONDAY MORNING.

O LORD GOD ALMIGHTY, Father of Angels and men, I praise and bless thy holy name for all thy goodness and loving-kindness to me and all mankind. I bless thee for my creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life; but above all, for thy great love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ. I bless thee for preserving me in the night past, and bringing me safe to the

beginning of a new day. Defend me in the same with thy mighty power, and grant that this day I fall into no sin, neither run into any kind of danger: but let all my doings be so ordered by thy governance, that I may do always that which is righteous in thy sight, through Jesus Christ my Redeemer. Grant me such grace, that I may be able to withstand the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil, and with a pure heart and mind to follow the steps of my gracious Redeemer. Keep me, I beseech thee, O Lord, from all things hurtful to my soul or body, and grant me thy pardon and peace, that being cleansed from all my sins, I may serve thee with a quiet mind, bring forth plenteously the fruit of good works, and continue in the same unto my life's end, through Jesus Christ my Saviour and Redeemer. Amen.

"Our Father," &c.

MONDAY EVENING.

ALMIGHTY GOD, who art the gracious Preserver of all mankind, I desire now to offer unto thee my praise and thanksgivings, for all the blessings thou hast this day bestowed upon me. I confess, O my God, that I am unworthy of the least of all thy mercies; for I have gone astray like a lost sheep. I have followed too much the devices and desires of my own heart. I have offended against thy holy laws. I have left undone those things which I ought to have done, and have done those things which I ought not to have done; and there is no health in me. But thou, O Lord, have mercy upon me a miserable offender. Spare me, O Lord, who now confess my faults unto thee. Enable me to bewail my manifold sins and offences, which I have from time to time most grievously committed, by thought, word, and deed, against thy divine Majesty. Have mercy upon me, have mercy upon me, most merciful Father; for my Saviour Jesus Christ's sake, forgive me all that is past, and grant me thy grace, that I may ever hereafter serve and please

thee, in newness of life, to the honour and glory of thy name, through Jesus Christ my Lord and Saviour. Take me under thy gracious care and keeping this night; save and defend me from all dangers. Grant unto my body rest in my bed, and unto my soul rest in thyself; and be thou my God and my guide, my hope and my help, my joy and my comfort, now and for evermore, through Jesus Christ my Redeemer. Amen.

"Our Father," &c.

TUESDAY MORNING.

O THOU FATHER of all mercies, and God of all goodness, I praise and bless thy name for thy mercies and favours unto me in the night past, and for bringing me safe to behold the light of a new day. Send down thy heavenly grace into my soul, that I may be enabled to worship thee, and serve thee as I ought to do. Enable me to believe in thee, to fear thee, and to love thee with all my heart, and mind, and soul, and strength; that I may honour thy holy name and word, and serve thee truly, this and all the days of my life. Give me thy grace, that I may love all mankind as myself, and do unto all, as I would they should do unto me. Enable me to love and honour my parents, obey my superiors, and submit to all my teachers. Suffer me not to hurt any body by word or deed. Make me just and honest in all my dealings. Let me not bear any malice or hatred in my heart. Keep my hands from picking and stealing, my tongue from evil speaking, lying, and slandering: keep my body in temperance, soberness, and chastity: that I may not covet any person's goods, but learn and labour to get my own living, and to do my duty in the state of life wherein it shall please thee to place me. Direct me so to pass through things temporal, that I may not finally lose the things which are eternal, but at last be received into thy presence, where is fulness of joy, and be seated at

thy right hand, where are pleasures for evermore, through Jesus Christ my Saviour. Amen.

TUESDAY EVENING.

O LORD GOD, the gracious giver of all good things, I praise and adore thee for thy goodness, which has been so plentiful towards me an unworthy child of man. Thou hast, in thy mercy, not only preserved me this day from all dangers, but bestowed upon me all things needful, for which I desire entirely to praise thy fatherly goodness, and with angels and archangels, and all the company of heaven, to laud and magnify thy holy name. Bless then the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me praise his holy name; for the Lord is gracious, and his mercy is everlasting towards them that fear him. And now, Lord, I most humbly implore thy fatherly goodness to forgive me whatever has this day in my heart or life offended the eyes of thy glory. O Lamb of God, Son of the Father, that takest away the sins of the world, receive my prayer. Prevent me, O Lord, in all my doings for the time to come, and further me with thy continual help, that in all my thoughts, words, and works, I may continually glorify thy holy name. Grant me thy grace, that I may so follow thy blessed saints in all righteousness and holy living, that I may at last come to be a partaker with them of glory everlasting. Do thou enable me, gracious Lord, to adorn thy gospel in all holy conversation, and to do whatever I do to the glory of thy name. Cleanse the thoughts of my heart, by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit, that I may perfectly love thee, and worthily magnify thy holy name. Let thy fatherly hand be ever over me, and thy Holy Spirit ever be with me; and do thou so lead me in the knowledge and obedience of thy word, that in the end I may obtain everlasting life, through Jesus Christ my Lord. And now, O Lord, as the night is come upon me, and as I am ready to betake myself to rest, I desire to commit myself into thy protection, who neither

slumberest nor sleepest, but hast still a watchful eye over me: O watch over me for good, that none of the evils I deserve may fall upon me. Preserve me from all terrors and dangers in the night. Remove my sin out of thy sight, and shew me the light of thy countenance, and refresh me with the sense of thy favour through Jesus Christ my Redeemer, to whom, with thee and the Holy Ghost, be all honour and praise for ever and ever. Amen.

WEDNESDAY MORNING.

O Lord God Almighty, Fountain of all goodness, and Father of all mercies, I desire again to bow my knee before thy holy Majesty, humbly beseeching thee to accept my praise and thanksgivings, for thy mercies to me in the night season. I laid me down and slept, and rose up again in safety; for it was thou only, O Lord, that sustainedst me. And now, O my soul, return unto thy rest. Look upon me, O Lord, in thy rich mercy, and for thy dear Son's sake be gracious unto my soul. Lighten my darkness, I beseech thee, O Lord, and let the day-spring from on high visit me. Enable me to cast away all the works of darkness, and to put upon me the armour of light, that I may be able to renounce the world, the flesh, and the devil; to keep thy holy will and commandments, and to walk in the same all the days of my life. Give me, O Lord, wisdom to know the things that belong to my peace, before I go hence, and am no more seen. Graft in my heart the love of thy name, increase in me true religion, and nourish me with all goodness. Give me the spirit to think and do always such things as be rightful. Teach me to ask and seek only such things as shall please thee and profit my soul. Give me such a measure of thy grace, that I may run the way of thy commandments, obtain thy gracious promises, and be made a partaker of thy heavenly treasures. Pour down upon me the abundance of thy mercy. Give me more than I can

either desire or deserve. O give me the increase of faith, hope, and love, and keep me ever by thy help from all things hurtful, and lead me to all things useful. Let thy grace always prevent and follow me, that I may be continually given to all good works, and may always glorify my Father, which is in heaven. These and every other blessing for me, and for thy whole church, I humbly beg in the name, and for the sake of the merits of Jesus Christ my Redeemer; to whom with thee and the Holy Ghost, &c.

"Our Father," &c.

WEDNESDAY EVENING.

O GOD, the Creator and Preserver of all mankind, I most humbly beseech thee now to accept my sincere praise and thanksgiving, for all the blessings and mercies that I have enjoyed this day. It is thou, O Lord, alone, who hast preserved me from dangers. And from thy gracious bounty have I received all things needful to promote my present and eternal happiness. Not unto me, O Lord, not unto me, but unto thy name be the praise. O Lord, I am unworthy through my manifold sins to offer thee any sacrifice; yet as thy property is to have mercy and to forgive, I beseech thee to accept this my bounden duty, not dealing with me according to my deserving, but after thy mercy and the merits of thy dear Son Jesus Christ. I confess unto thee, O my God, that I am tied and bound with the chain of my sins: yet let the pitifulness of thy great mercy loose me. I have no power of myself to help myself: O do thou keep me by thy grace, both outwardly in my body, and inwardly in my soul, that I may be enabled to present both body and soul a holy and pleasing sacrifice unto thee, thro' my Redeemer Jesus Christ. Grant me, O my God, grace, that I may love what thou hast commanded, and earnestly desire what thou hast promised. Enable me, amidst the many changes of this world, to fix my heart constantly upon things above. May I both in heart and mind con-

stantly thither ascend, whither my Saviour Jesus Christ is gone before, to prepare a place for me. Bring me up, O Lord, in thy fear and love. Keep me under the protection of thy good providence. Hide me under the shadow of thy wings: keep me from the evils of this world, and land me safe at last on that blissful shore, where all is quietness and assurance for ever.

Into thy hands, O my God, I this night commend my soul and body. Give thy angels charge over me, and grant me such rest and sleep as may fit me for the duties of the following day. And, O my God, do thou prepare me for my last sleep in death, my departure out of this mortal state; that before I go hence, I may finish the work thou hast given me to do, and at last finish my course with joy, thro' Jesus Christ my Lord. Amen.

"Our Father," &c.

THURSDAY MORNING.

O THOU Eternal FOUNTAIN of all wisdom, whom I cannot see or know, but by the mean of thy own light, vouchsafe to manifest thyself to my soul, and teach me to know aright, thee the only true God and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent. O blessed Sun of Righteousness, arise upon me with healing in thy wings, to scatter all the clouds of folly and ignorance that overspread my soul. Open my eyes to see the wondrous things thy love has wrought. Suffer me not to remain in darkness concerning any thing that is needful for me to know, in order to my present peace, and my eternal glory. O Lord, incline mine ears to wisdom, and my heart to understanding, that I may follow on to know the Lord, and increase in the knowledge and love of God. Give me, O Lord, that highest learning, to know thee, and that best wisdom, to know myself. Command a blessing on my studies and endeavours, and bless me, and help me, Lord, in my learning all such things, as shall stand

me in stead, and do me good. Let my soul and body, and all their powers, be under thy conduct, and employed to thy glory. Shew me thy ways, O Lord, and lead me into truth, and whatever I am ignorant of, unto me let it be given to know the mysteries of thy kingdom: and let me count all things but dung and dross, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord; to whom, with thee and the Holy Ghost, be all honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen. Vouchsafe, O Lord, to keep me this day from all sin. Bless my going out and coming in, now and for evermore. Amen.

"Our Father," &c.

THURSDAY EVENING.

O MY heavenly FATHER, who tookest me out of my mother's womb, who wast my hope, when I hanged yet upon my mother's breast, I have been preserved by thee ever since I was born: O go not from me in this my youth, but send out thy light and thy truth, that they may lead me, and bring me to thy holy hill, and to thy dwelling place. Teach me thy way, O Lord, and enable me to walk in thy truth. O knit my heart unto thee, that I may fear thy name; and give me understanding in the way of godliness. Lord, I am young, and cannot discern between good and evil: O let me not go out of the way of thy commandments. Learn me true understanding and knowledge. Teach me to do the thing that pleaseth thee; for thou art my God. Let thy loving Spirit lead me forth into all the paths of righteousness. Let my study day and night be in thy word, that I may become wise unto salvation. Make thy word a light to my feet, and a lamp to my path: guide me here with thy counsel, and after that receive me into glory. Withdraw not thou thy mercy from me, O my God; but let thy loving-kindness and thy truth always preserve me. Give thy blessing to me, and with thy favourable kindness defend me as with a shield. Shew me the path of life, and enable me to walk therein, till I come

into thy presence, where is fulness of joy, and to thy right hand, where are pleasures for evermore. As thou hast been pleased to preserve me this day, and hast bestowed upon me all things needful, I desire to bless thy name for the same. Take care of me this night, O Lord, and visit me with thy mercies. Preserve me, O Lord, from every thing hurtful, and let thy merciful arms for ever surround me, through Jesus Christ my Saviour. Amen.

"Our Father," &c.

FRIDAY MORNING.

O LORD my God, I am taught by thy Word, that I am by nature born in sin and a child of wrath, and that except I be born again, I cannot see the kingdom of God. O Lord, do thou teach me the meaning of the new birth, that I a child of wrath may become a child of grace. Lord, take away the veil from my heart, that I may know my sinful nature. Make the remembrance of my sins grievous unto me, and the burden of them intolerable. Lead me then to the fountain opened for sin and uncleanness, that I may there wash and be cleansed. Suffer me not to rest, till I find redemption in thy blood, even the forgiveness of all my sins. It has pleased thee, O Lord, to hide these things from the wise and prudent, and to reveal them unto babes. Reveal then, O Lord, thy love in my soul. Let me taste and see how good and gracious thou art. Suffer a child to come unto thee, and forbid me not. I am unworthy; but receive me as thou didst the little children of old into thy gracious arms, and adopt me thine for ever. Shed abroad in my heart thy love, and fill me with all peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. Let every thought, word, and deed, be henceforth to the glory of thy great name through Jesus Christ, and at last grant me an abundant entrance into thy everlasting kingdom, through Jesus Christ my Lord and Saviour. Amen.

"Our Father," &c.

Be thou with me, O Lord; this day, to bless and keep, guide and govern me, and let me be thine, and only thine, for ever. Amen.

"Our Father," &c.

FRIDAY EVENING.

O THOU ever blessed GOD, the Author and Giver of Life, I desire with all humility to draw near unto thy gracious Majesty, to offer up unto thee my evening sacrifice of prayer and praise. Thou alone, O God, art worthy to be praised, and to be had in everlasting remembrance. Glory be to thee, O most adorable Lord God. Glory be to thy name for all thy mercies and goodness bestowed on me thy most unworthy servant, in the day that is now past. Give me a due sense of all thy mercies, that my heart may be unfeignedly thankful, and grant me thy grace that I may shew forth thy praise not only with my lips but in my life. Have mercy upon me, O God, after thy great goodness. According to the multitude of thy mercies, do away mine offences. Wash me thoroughly from my wickedness, and cleanse me from all my sin. Turn thy face from my sins, and put out all my misdeeds. Create in me a clean heart, O my God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence, neither withdraw thy loving kindness from me. Spare me, O Lord, whom thou hast redeemed with thy most precious blood, and be not angry with me for ever. For the glory of thy name, turn from me those evils that I have most righteously deserved, and enable me to walk before thee henceforth in holiness and righteousness to thy praise and glory. Let thy mercy and goodness follow me all the days of my life, and be thou my guide unto death, and my portion for ever. Give me thy grace, that I may duly consider my latter end and the fewness of my days, that I may seriously apply my heart unto wisdom, and work out my salvation with fear and trembling, before the night of death cometh upon me, wherein no man can work. Enable me so to live, that I may not only be

looking but also longing for my Saviour's appearing: that when he shall come, I may also appear with him in glory. And now, O Lord my God, I beseech thee take me under thy protection this night, and preserve me from all evil. I will lay me down in peace and take my rest; for it is thou, Lord, only that makest me dwell in safety. In thee have I trusted, let me never be confounded. These and all other mercies I humbly beg in the name of my Mediator Jesus Christ. Amen.

"Our Father," &c.

SATURDAY MORNING.

ALMIGHTY and everlasting GOD, I bless thee that of thy infinite goodness, thou hast preserved me this night past, and brought me in safety to this morning. Withdraw not, I humbly beseech thee, thy protection from me, but take me under the care of thy providence this day. Watch over me with the eyes of thy mercy, direct my soul and body according to the rule of thy will, that I may pass this and all my days to thy glory. O Lord, I am but a child, and know not how to go out or come in; and I am in the midst of a sinful world. Give therefore unto thy servant an understanding heart, that I may know and choose the good, and abhor and shun that which is evil. According to thy mercy, think upon me, O Lord, of thy goodness. Make me to remember thee in the days of my youth. O learn me true wisdom, and let the law of thy mouth be dearer to me than thousands of gold and silver, and let my whole delight be therein. O let me be devoted to thee from my childhood. Keep out of my heart all love of the world, of riches, or any other created thing, and fill it with the love of God. Thou knowest how many and powerful are the enemies of my soul, that seek to destroy it, the world, the flesh and the devil. O Lord, help; O Lord, save; O Lord, deliver me from them. Give me grace to renounce

them all, and to keep thy holy will and commandments all the days of my life. Shew me and make me what I must be before I can inherit thy kingdom. Teach me the truth as it is in Jesus. Save me from my own will, and let thine be done in me and by me. O make me thy child by adoption and grace. Renew me daily with thy Holy Spirit, and guide me in all my ways, till thou hast perfected me for thy heavenly kingdom. Make me dutiful to my parents, affectionate to my relations, obedient to my superiors, and loving towards all mankind. And grant, that as I grow in stature, I may grow in wisdom and in thy favour, till thou shalt take me to thine everlasting kingdom, there to dwell with thee for ever and ever, through Jesus Christ my Saviour and Redeemer. Amen.

"Our Father," &c.

SATURDAY EVENING.

I DESIRE to offer unto thee, O Lord, my evening sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving for all thy mercies bestowed upon me. I bless thee for my creation, preservation, and above all, for my redemption, by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. I bless thee for bringing me safely to the conclusion of this day, and humbly implore the pardon of all the sins I have been guilty of, whether in thought, word, or deed. Have mercy upon me, O God, and do thou free me from all the sins I have committed, and deliver me from the punishment I have deserved. O thou blessed guide of my youth, give me thy grace to seek after thee in my early years, that thou mayest not be unmindful of me in the time of age. Keep me from the evil of the world, and carry me safe through it to thy kingdom. Take care of me, and provide for me, and dispose of me in the world, as shall be most for thy glory and my good. Leave me not to myself, in the hands of my own counsel, but let me be taught of God. Take thou, O Lord, the gracious charge, and guidance, and government of me, and fix in my heart thy fear and love, and direct all my ways to please not myself but

thee. O redeem me from the power of my sins by thy grace, and from the punishments of them by thy blood, and by both bring me to thy glory. I desire, O my God, to give up myself wholly to thee. I would be thine, and only thine for ever. O my God, my Saviour, turn not away thy face from a poor child that seeks thee. Give me to know that I am nothing, and can do nothing of myself, and that if ever I am thine, I must be wholly indebted to thee for it. Let me be entirely devoted unto thee, and do thou make me obedient and faithful unto the end. Make me to remember thee in my bed, and think upon thee when I am waking: thou hast preserved me from the dangers of the day past, thou hast been my support ever since I was born. Under the shadow of thy wings let me pass this night in comfort and peace. Keep me both in body and soul, and give me such rest as my body has need of. And grant, O Lord, that when I lay down my body in the grave, my soul may rise to life immortal, through the merits and intercession of thy dear Son, my Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen.

"Our Father," &c.

SUNDAY MORNING.

O ALMIGHTY GOD, Maker of all mankind, in whom we live, and move, and have our being, who makest the outgoings of the morning and the evening to rejoice, suffer me now to approach thy divine Majesty with all reverence and godly fear. I desire to adore thy sacred name, who hast in thy goodness brought me in safety to behold the beginning of a new day and another sabbath. I bless thee who hast in love to my soul and for the glory of thy name, set apart this day for holy uses, to engage me in thy service, wherein consists my honour and happiness. This is thy day, O Lord, enable me to rejoice and be glad in it. May I ever remember to keep it holy, not doing my own works, nor finding my own pleasure, nor speaking my own words: but so delight in thee, that thou mayest give me my heart's

desire. Bless to me thy word, O most heavenly Father, and all the means of grace, that I may not use them in vain or to my own hurt, but for the instructing my mind, reforming my life, and the saving my soul. Save me from all hardness of heart and contempt of thy word; increase my love to it, and enable me to hear it meekly, and to receive it with pure affection, and to bring forth fruit unto good living. Open my understanding to receive thy truth in the love thereof. Set it so powerfully upon my heart, and root it so deep in my soul, that the fruits thereof may be seen in my life, to thy glory and praise. May I always so hear, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest thy word, that it may be a savour of life to my soul. O let me not offer vain oblations unto the Lord, drawing nigh with my lips, while my heart is far from thee. But do thou enable me to worship thee with holy worship, with joy and delight, with profit and pleasure. Fill me with a comfortable sense of thy presence, that I may serve thee with reverence and godly fear, to the comfort of my soul and the glory of thy name. O Lord God, do thou clothe thy priests with righteousness, and let thy saints rejoice and sing. Break the bread of life to all our souls, that we may eat and live for ever. O Lord, hear my prayers, and let my cry come unto thee. Do more and better for me than I can either desire or deserve, for the sake of my blessed Saviour and Redeemer Jesus Christ, to whom with thee and the Holy Ghost, be all praise and glory, now and for ever. Amen.

"Our Father," &c.

SUNDAY EVENING.

MERCIFUL GOD, permit me to pay thee, now, my evening sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, for all the blessings and favours to my body and soul, so freely bestowed and so long continued unto me. Thou hast dealt graciously with me, O Lord God, and hast been exceeding good and kind to me beyond all that I had reason to expect or am able to express. I bless thee, O Lord, for every help

which I enjoy to the promoting my present and eternal good. I desire to ascribe all praise and glory to thee, to whom alone it is due. O Lord, I bless thee that thy house is open to me, the bread of life offered me, the word of salvation preached, and thy Spirit striving with me. O suffer me not to receive thy grace in vain, nor let thy word be lost upon me. Do thou apply it to my heart, and fix it in my memory, that it may prove a blessing to my soul. In mercy, O Lord, pass by all things which in thy pure and holy eyes have been amiss this day past; pardon my neglects and the guilt of my misdoings. And as I have heard how to walk and to please thee, O my God, help me to walk more worthy of the Lord unto all well-pleasing, that I may be built up in thy true fear and love, and in the right knowledge and faith of our Lord Jesus Christ. Be thou pleased to second every word of instruction that I have received, with the power of thy grace and holy Spirit; and above all, O blessed God, do thou give me a heart filled with thy love, and lifted up in thy praise, and devoted to thy honour and glory all the days of my life. Take me, O Lord God, my Saviour, into thy gracious care and protection. Preserve me from all dangers in the night season. Let me lie down and sleep in thy arms, and when the trumpet shall sound, and at last call me from the sleep of death, let me be caught up into the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so for ever be with the Lord. All these mercies, O my God, I most humbly ask, for the alone sake of Jesus Christ my Redeemer. Amen.

"Our Father," &c.

A Prayer for Relations, Friends, &c. to be used after Morning and Evening Prayer.

VOUCHSAFE, O LORD, to bless my father and mother, and all my relations, with the fear of thy Name. Bless them in their souls and bodies; perfect them in every good word and work, and be thou their guide unto death.

Bless my friends, forgive my enemies; and grant unto all mankind the knowledge and love of thee. Have mercy upon all who are afflicted in mind, body, or estate. Give them patience under their sufferings, and a happy issue out of all their afflictions. And receive them and me at last into thy blessed kingdom, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

Grace before Meat.

O LORD, I beseech thee, give thy blessing with what thy mercy has here provided me with, that whether I eat or drink, or whatsoever I do, I may do all to thy glory and praise, through Jesus Christ my Lord. Amen.

After Meals.

O LORD my GOD, I bless thy Holy Name for this mercy, which I have now received from thy bounty and goodness. Feed now my soul with thy grace, that I may make it my meat and drink to do thy gracious Will, through Jesus Christ my Saviour. Amen.

ADMONITIONS

TO PERSONS OF VARIOUS DESCRIPTIONS.

I.

A WORD TO A SABBATH BREAKER.

"Remember the Sabbath-Day to keep it holy."

HAVE you forgotten who spoke these Words? Or do you set him at defiance? Do you bid him do his worst? Have a care. You are not stronger than he. Let the potsherd strive with the potsherds of the earth; but woe unto the man that contendeth with his Maker: He sitteth in the circle of the heavens: and the inhabitants of the earth are as grasshoppers before him.

"Six days shalt thou do all manner of work. But the Seventh Day is the Sabbath of the LORD thy GOD." It is not thine, but GOD's Day. He claims it for his own. He always did claim it for his own, even from the beginning of the world. "In six days the LORD made heaven and earth, and rested the Seventh Day. Therefore, the LORD blessed the Seventh Day, and hallowed it." He hallowed it; that is, he made it holy: he reserved it for his own service. He appointed, that as long as the sun and moon, the heavens and the earth should endure, the children of men should spend this day in the worship of him who gave them life, and breath, and all things.

Shall a man then rob GOD? And art thou the man? Consider! Think what thou art doing. Is it not God that giveth thee all thou hast? Every day thou livest, is it not his gift? And wilt thou give him none? Nay, wilt thou deny him what is his own already? He will not, he cannot quit his claim. This day is GOD's. It was so from the

beginning: it will be so to the end of the world. This he cannot give to another. "O render unto God the things that are God's;" now, "to-day, while it is called to-day."

For whose sake does God lay claim to this day? For his sake or thine? Doubtless not for his own. He needeth not thee, nor any child of man. Look unto the heavens and see, and behold the clouds which are higher than thou. If thou sinnest, what dost thou against him? If thy transgressions be multiplied, what dost thou unto him? If thou art righteous, what givest thou him? Or what receiveth he of thine hand? For thy own sake he calleth thee to serve him. For thy own sake he demands a part of thy time to be restored to him that gave thee all. Acknowledge his love. Learn while thou art on earth, to praise the King of heaven. Spend this day, as thou hopest to spend that day which never shall have an end.

The Lord not only hallowed the Sabbath-day, but he hath also blessed it. So that you are an enemy to yourself. You throw away your own blessing, if you neglect to keep this day holy. It is a day of special grace. The King of heaven now sits upon his mercy-seat, in a more gracious manner than on other days, to bestow blessings on those that observe it. If you love your own soul, can you forbear laying hold on so happy an opportunity? Awake, arise, let God give thee his blessing! Receive a token of his love: cry to him that thou mayest sing the riches of his grace and mercy in Christ Jesus! You do not know how few more of these days of salvation you may have. And how dreadful would it be, to be hurried hence in the abuse of his proffered mercy!

O what mercy hath God prepared for you, if you do not trample it under foot! What mercy hath he prepared for them that fear him, even before the sons of men! A peace which the world cannot give; joy that no man taketh from you; rest from doubt and fear, and sorrow of heart: and love, the beginning of heaven. And are not these for you? Are not they all purchased for you, by him who loved you, and gave himself for you? For you a sinner! You a rebel

against God? You who have so long crucified him afresh! Now look unto him whom you have pierced. Now, say, Lord, it is enough. I have fought against thee long enough. I yield, Jesus, Master, have mercy upon me! On this day, above all, cry aloud, and spare not, to the God who heareth prayer. This is the day he hath set apart for the good of your soul, both in this world, and that which is to come. Never more disappoint the design of his love, either by worldly business or idle diversions. Let not a little thing keep you from the house of God, either in the forenoon or afternoon. And spend as much as you can of the rest of the day, either in repeating what you have heard, or in reading the Scriptures, or in private prayer, or talking of the things of God. Let his love be ever before your eyes. Let his praise be ever in your mouth. You have lived many years in folly and sin. Now live one day unto the Lord.

Do not ask any more, "Where is the harm, if after Church I spend the remainder of the day in the fields; or in a public-house, or in taking a little diversion?" You know where is the harm. Your own heart tells you so plainly, that you cannot but hear. It is a base mis-spending your talent, and a barefaced contempt of God and his authority. You have heard of God's judgments even upon earth against the profaners of this day. And yet these are but as drops of that storm of fiery indignation, which will at last consume his adversaries. Glory be to God, who hath now given you a sense of this. You now know, this was always designed for a day of blessing. May you never again by your idleness or profaneness, turn that blessing into a curse! What folly, what madness would that be. And in what sorrow and anguish would it end! And yet a little while and death will close up the day of grace and mercy. And those who despise them now, will have no more Sabbaths, or Sacraments, or Prayers, for ever! Then they will wish to recover that which they now idly cast away! But all in vain. For they will then find no place for repentance, though they should seek it carefully with tears.

O my friend, know the privilege you enjoy. Now remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy. Your day of life and of grace is far spent. The night of death is at hand. Make haste to use the time you have: improve the last hours of your day. Now provide the things which make for your peace, that you may stand before the face of God for ever.

II.

A WORD TO A SWEARER.

Swear not at all, saith the LORD GOD *of Heaven and Earth.*

ART thou without GOD in the world? Hast thou no knowledge of GOD? No concern about him? Is not GOD in all thy thoughts?

Dost thou believe there is a God? Where? In heaven only? Nay, he filleth all in all. "Am I a God at hand, saith the Lord, and not a God afar off? Can any hide himself in secret places, that I shall not see him? Do not I fill heaven and earth?"

Whither wilt thou go then from his Spirit? Or whither wilt thou flee from his presence? If thou go up into heaven, God is there. If thou go into hell, he is there also. If thou take the wings of the morning, and remain in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there his hand shall touch thee, and God's right hand shall hold thee.

GOD seeth thee now: his eyes are upon thee: he observes all thy thoughts: he compasseth thy path: he counteth all thy steps: he is acquainted with all thy ways: by him actions are weighed: nor is there a word in thy tongue but he knoweth it altogether.

And does not power belong unto GOD? Yea, all power in heaven and in earth! Is he not able, even while thou readest or hearest these words, to crush thee into nothing? Can he not just now crumble thee into dust? Or bid the

earth open and swallow thee up? O do not set him at nought! Do not provoke him thus! Do not fly in his face! Can he not in a moment, cast forth his lightnings and tear thee? Shoot forth his arrows and consume thee? What hinders him from cutting thee off this instant? Sending thee now, now, quick into hell?

Would God do thee any wrong therein! What! In giving thee the request of thy own lips? What words were those thou spakest but now? Did not God hear? Why, thou didst pray to God to send thee to hell. Thou didst ask him to damn thy soul. How! Art thou in love with damnation? Art thou in haste to dwell with everlasting burnings? To be day and night tormented in that flame, without a drop of water to cool thy tongue?

I had rather thou shouldest go to the Paradise of God. Hadst not thou? Is not heaven better than hell? Art thou not convinced of this in thy own conscience? Why then, amend thy prayer: cry to God, "Save my soul, for I have sinned against thee! save me from all my sins. Save me from all my evil tempers, and evil desires! Make me holy as thou art holy! Let me know thee, and love thee, and serve thee, now and for ever!"

And is not God willing to do this? Surely he is; for God loveth thee. He gave his only Son, that thou mightest not perish, but have everlasting life. Christ died for thee. And he that believeth on him hath everlasting life. Mark that word: he hath it. He hath it now. He hath the beginning of heaven even upon earth; for his soul is filled with the love of God; and the love of God is heaven. He that truly believes on Jesus Christ, hath a peace which earth cannot give; his mind is always calm: he hath learned in every state therewith to be content; he is always easy, quiet, well-pleased: always happy in life and in death. For a believer is not afraid to die: he desires to be dissolved and to be with Christ: he desires to quit this house of clay, and to be carried by angels into Abraham's Bosom: to hear the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God, and to see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven; to stand at

his right hand, and hear that word, (which I earnestly beg of God you and I may hear;) "Come, ye blessed, receive the kingdom prepared for you from the beginning of the world!"

III.

A WORD TO A DRUNKARD.

ARE you a Man? God made you a Man, but you make yourself a Beast. Wherein does a Man differ from a Beast? Is it not chiefly in Reason, in Understanding? But you throw away what reason you have. You strip yourself of your understanding. You do all you can to make yourself a mere beast: not a fool, not a madman only, but a swine, a poor filthy swine.

O how honourable is a beast of God's making, compared to one that makes himself a beast? But that is not all. You make yourself a devil. You stir up all the devilish tempers that are in you; you heighten and increase them. You cause the fire of anger, or malice, or lust, to burn seven times hotter than before. At the same time you grieve the Spirit of God, till you drive him quite away from you. And whatever spark of good remained in your soul, you drown and quench at once.

So you are now just fit for every work of the devil; having cast off all that is good or virtuous, and filled your heart with every thing that is bad, that is earthly, sensual, base, and devilish. You have forced the Spirit of God to depart from you; for you would take none of his reproof: and you have given yourself up into the hands of the devil, to be led blindfold by him at his will.

Now, what shall hinder the same thing from befalling you, which befell him who was asked, Which was the greatest sin: adultery, drunkenness, or murder? He said,

Drunkenness was the least. Soon after, he got drunk: he then met with another man's wife, and ravished her; the husband coming to help her, he murdered him.—So drunkenness, adultery, and murder, went together.

I have heard a story of a poor, wild Indian, far wiser than either him or you. The Englishman gave him a cask of strong liquor. The next morning he called for his friends together, and setting it in the midst of them said, "These white men have given us poison. The man who gave me this was a wise man, and would hurt none but his enemies. But as soon as he had drunk of this, he was mad, and would have killed his own brother. We will not be poisoned." He then broke the cask, and poured the liquor upon the sand.

On what motive do you thus poison yourself? Only for the pleasure of doing it? What, will you make yourself a beast, or rather a devil? Will you run the hazard of committing all manner of villanies; and this only for the poor pleasure of a few moments, while the poison is running down your throat? O never call yourself a Christian! Never call yourself a Man! You are sunk beneath the greater part of the beasts that perish.

But you say, "You drink for the sake of company. You do it to oblige your friends." For company do you say? How is this? Will you take a dose of ratsbane for company? If twenty men were to do so before you, would you not desire to be excused? How much more may you desire to be excused from going to hell for company? But, "to oblige your friends?" What manner of friends are they, who would be obliged by your destroying yourself, who would suffer, nay entice you so to do? They are villains. They are your worst enemies. They are just such friends, as a man that would smile in your face, and stab you to the heart.

O do not aim at any excuse. Say not, as many do, "I am no one's enemy but my own." If it were so, what a poor saying is this, "I give none but my own soul to the

devil?" Alas! is not that too much? Why shouldest thou give him thy own soul? Do it not: Rather give it to GOD.

But it is not so. You are an enemy to your King, whom you rob thereby of an useful subject. You are an enemy to your country, which you defraud of the service you might do, either as a Man or a Christian. You are an enemy to every man that sees you in your sin; for your example may move him to do the same. A drunkard is a public enemy. I should not wonder at all if (like Cain of old) you were afraid, that "every man who meeteth you should slay you."

Above all, you are an enemy to GOD; the great GOD of heaven and earth: to him who surrounds you on every side, and can just now send you quick into hell. Him you are continually affronting to his face. You are setting him at open defiance. O do not provoke him thus any more. Fear the great GOD.

You are an enemy to Christ, to the Lord that bought you. You fly in the face of his authority. You set at nought both his sovereign power and tender love. You crucify him afresh. And when you call him your Saviour, what is it less than to "betray him with a kiss?"

O repent! See, and feel what a wretch you are! Pray to God to convince you in your inmost soul, how often you have crucified him afresh, and put him to open shame. Pray that you may know yourself to be (inwardly and outwardly) all sin, all guilt, all helplessness. Then cry out, "Thou Son of David, have mercy on me. Thou Lamb of God, take away my sins:—Grant me thy peace:—Justify the ungodly:—O bring me to the blood of sprinkling, that I may go and sin no more:—that I may love much, having had so much forgiven!"

IV.

A WORD TO AN UNHAPPY WOMAN.

WHITHER are you going? To heaven or hell? Do you not know? Do you never think about it? Why do you not? Are you never to die? Nay, it is appointed for all men to die. And what comes after? Only heaven or hell. Will the not thinking of death, put it farther off? No; not a day: not one hour. Or will your not thinking of hell, save you from it? O no: you know better. And you know every moment you are nearer hell whether you are thinking of it or not: that is, if you are not nearer heaven. You must be nearer one or the other.

I intreat you think a little on that plain question, Are you going toward heaven or hell? To which of the two does this way lead? Is it possible you should be ignorant? Did you never hear, that neither adulterers nor fornicators, shall inherit the kingdom?—That fornicators and adulterers God will judge? And how dreadful will be their sentence, "Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels!"

Surely you do not mock at the Word of God! You are not yet sunk so low as this. Consider, then, that awful word, "Know ye not, that ye are the temples of God?" Were not *you* designed for the Spirit of God to dwell in? Were not you devoted to God in baptism? But if any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy. O do not provoke him to it any longer. Tremble before the great, the holy God!

Know you not, that your body is, or ought to be, the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you? Know you not, that you are not your own? For you are bought with a price. And, O how great a price! You are not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold: but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. O when will you glorify God, with your body and your spirit, which are God's.

Ah poor wretch! How far are you from this! How low are you fallen! You yourself are ashamed of what you do. Are you not? Conscience, speak in the sight of God! Does not your own heart condemn you at this very hour? Do not you shudder at the condition you are in? Dare for once to lay your hand upon your breast, and ask, "What am I doing? And what must the end of these things be?" Destruction both of body and soul.

Destruction both of body as well as soul! Can it be otherwise? Are you not plunging into misery in this world, as well as the world to come! What have you brought upon yourself already!—What infamy!—What contempt! How could you now appear among those relations or friends, that were once so loved, and so loving to you? What pangs have you given! How do some of them still weep for you in secret places! And will you not weep for yourself? When you see nothing before you but want, pain, diseases, death? O spare yourself! Have pity upon your body, if not your soul. Stop! before you rot above ground and perish!

Do you ask, What shall I do? First, sin no more. First of all secure this point. Now, this instant now, escape for your life. Stay not. Look not behind you. Whatever you do, sin no more: starve, die, rather than sin. Be more careful for your soul than your body. Take care of that too: but of your poor soul first.

"But you have no friend: none, at least, that is able to help you." Indeed you have: one that is a present help in time of trouble. You have a friend that has all power in heaven and earth, even Jesus Christ the righteous. He loved sinners of old; and he does so still. He then suffered the publicans and harlots to come unto him. And one of them washed his feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. I would to God *you* were in her place! Say, Amen! Lift up your heart, and it shall be done. How soon will he say, "Woman, be of good cheer! Thy sins, which are many, are forgiven thee. Go in

peace. Sin no more. Love much: for thou hast much forgiven."

Do you still ask, But what shall I do for bread?—For food to eat and raiment to put on? I answer, in the name of the Lord God, (and mark well! His promise shall not fail,) "Seek thou first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and these things shall be added unto thee."

Settle it first in your heart, Whatever I have or have not, I will not have everlasting burnings. I will not sell my soul and body for bread: better even starve on earth than burn in hell. Then ask help of God. He is not slow to hear. He hath never failed them that seek him. He who feeds the yonng ravens that call upon him, will not let you perish for lack of sustenance. He will provide, in a way you thought not of, if you seek him with your whole heart. O let your heart be toward him: seek him from the heart. Fear sin, more than want, more than death. And cry mightily to him who bore your sins, till you have bread to eat that the world knoweth not of; till you have angels' food, even the love of God, shed abroad in your heart: till you can say, 'Now I know that *my* Redeemer liveth, that he hath loved *me* and given himself for *me:* and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God!'

A WORD TO A SMUGGLER.

I. What is Smuggling? It is the importing, selling, or buying of run goods: that is, those which have not paid the duty appointed by law to be paid to the King.

1. Importing run goods. All smuggling vessels do this with an high hand. It is the chief, if not the whole business of these, to bring goods which have not paid duty.

2. Next to these are all sea captains, officers, sailors, or passengers, who import any thing without paying the duty which the law requires.

3. A third sort of smugglers are all those who sell any thing which has not paid the duty.

4. A fourth sort, those who buy tea, liquors, linen, handkerchiefs, or any thing else which has not paid duty.

II. "But why should they not? What harm is there in it?"

1. I answer, Open Smuggling (such as was common a few years ago, on the southern coasts especially) is robbing on the highway: and as much harm as there is in this, just so much there is in smuggling. A smuggler of this kind is no honester than an highwayman. They may shake hands together.

2. Private Smuggling is just the same with picking of pockets. There is full as much harm in this as in that. A smuggler of this kind is no honester than a pickpocket. These may shake hands together.

3. But open smugglers are worse than common highwaymen, and private smugglers are worse than common pickpockets. For it is undoubtedly worse to rob our father, than one we have no obligation to. And it is worse still, far worse, to rob a good father, one who sincerely loves us, and is at that very time doing all he can to provide for us, and to make us happy. Now this is exactly the present case. King George is the Father of all his subjects: and not only so, but he is a good father. He shews his love to them on all occasions; and is continually doing all that is in his power to make his subjects happy.

4. An honest man therefore would be ashamed to ask, Where is the harm in robbing such a Father? His own reason, if he had any at all, would give him a speedy answer. But *you* are a Christian: Are you not? You say, you believe the Bible. Then I say to *you*, in the name of God, and in the name of Christ, "Thou shalt not steal." Thou shalt not take what is not thine own, what is the right of another man. But the duties appointed by law are the King's right, as much as your coat is *your* right. He has as good a right to them, as *you* have to this: these are his property, as much as this is yours. Therefore you

are as much a thief if you take his duties, as a man is that takes your coat.

5. If you believe the Bible, I say to *you*, as our Saviour said to them of old time, "Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's." If then you mind our Saviour's words, be as careful to honour the King, as to fear God. Be as exact in giving the King, what is due to the King, as in giving God what is due to God. Upon no account whatever rob or defraud him of the least thing which is his lawful property.

6. If you believe the Bible, I say to *you*, as St. Paul said to the ancient Christians, "Render unto all their dues:" In particular, "Custom to whom custom is due, tribute to whom tribute." Now custom is by the laws of England due to the King. Therefore every one in England is bound to pay it him. So that robbing the King herein, is abundantly worse than common stealing, or common robbing on the highway.

7. And so it is on another account also: for it is a general robbery: It is, in effect, not only robbing the King, but robbing every honest man in the nation. For the more the King's duties are diminished, the more the taxes must be increased. And these lie upon us all: they are the burden not of some, but of all the people of England. Therefore every smuggler is a thief-general, who picks the pockets both of the King, and all his fellow-subjects. He wrongs them all: and above all, the honest traders, many of whom he deprives of their maintenance: constraining them either not to sell their goods at all, or to sell them to no profit. Some of them are tempted hereby, finding they cannot get bread for their families, to turn thieves too. And then *you* are accountable for *their* sin as well as your own: You bring their blood upon your own head. Calmly consider this, and you will never more ask, "What harm there is in Smuggling?"

III. 1. But for all this, cannot men find *excuses* for it? Yes, abundance; such as they are. "I would not do this," says one; I would not sell uncustomed goods: but I am

under a necessity: I can't live without it." I answer, May not the man who stops you on the highway, say the very same? "I would not take your purse; but I am under a necessity: I can't live without it." Suppose the case to be your own: and will you accept of this excuse? Would not you tell him, "Nay, let the worst come to the worst, you had better be honest, though you starve." But that need not be neither. Others who had no more to begin with, yet find a way to live honestly. And certainly so may you: however settle it in your heart, "Live or die, I will be an honest man."

2. "Nay," says another, "we do not wrong the King: for he loses nothing by us. Yea, on the contrary, the King is rather a gainer, namely, by the seizures that are made."

So you plunder the King, out of stark love and kindness! You rob him, to make him rich! It is true, you take away his purse: but you put an heavier in its place! Are you serious? Do you mean what you say? Look me in the face and tell me so. You cannot. You know in your own conscience, that what comes to the King, out of all the seizures made the year round, does not amount to the tenth, no, not the hundredth part of what he is defrauded of.

But if he really gained more than he lost, that would not excuse *you*. You are not to commit robbery, though the person robbed were afterwards to gain by it. You are not to *do evil, that good may come*. If you do, your *damnation is just*.

"But certainly," say some, "the King is a gainer by it, or he might easily suppress it." Will you tell him which way? By custom-house officers? But many of them have no desire to suppress it. They find their account in its continuance: they come in for a share of the plunder. But what if they had a desire to suppress it? They have not the power. Some of them have lately made the experiment: and what was the consequence? Why they lost a great part of their bread, and were in danger of losing their lives.

Can the King suppress Smuggling by parties of soldiers?

That he cannot do. For all the soldiers he has are not enough, to watch every port and every creek in Great Britain. Besides, the soldiers that are employed, will do little more than the custom-house officers. For there are ways and means of taking off *their* edge too, and making them as quiet as lambs.

"But many courtiers and great men, who know the King's mind, not only connive at smuggling, but practise it." And what can we infer from this? Only, that those great men are great villains. They are great highwaymen and pickpockets: and their greatness does not excuse, but makes their crimes tenfold more inexcusable.

But besides. Suppose the King were willing to be cheated, how would this excuse your cheating his subjects. All your fellow-subjects, every honest man, and in particular, every honest trader? How would it excuse, your making it impossible for him to live, unless he will turn knave as well as yourself?

3. "Well, but I am not convinced it is a sin: my conscience does not condemn me for it." No! Are you not convinced, that robbery is a sin? Then I am sorry for you. And does not your conscience condemn you for stealing? Then your conscience is asleep. I pray God to smite you to the heart, and awaken it this day!

4. "Nay, but my soul is quite happy in the love of God: therefore I cannot think it is wrong." I answer, Wrong it must be, if the Bible is right. Therefore, either that love is a mere delusion, a fire of your own kindling; or God may have hitherto winked at the times of ignorance. But now you have the means of knowing better. Now light is offered to you. And if you shut your eyes against the light, the love of God cannot possibly continue.

5. "But I only buy a little brandy or tea now and then, just for my own use." That is, I only *steal a little*. God says, Steal not at all.

6. "Nay, I do not buy any at all myself: I only send my child or servant for it." You receive it of them: Do you not? And the receiver is as bad as the thief.

7. "Why, I would not meddle with it, but I am forced, by my parent, husband, or master." If you are forced by your father or mother to rob, you will be hanged nevertheless. This may lessen, but does not take away the fault; for you ought to suffer rather than sin.

8. "But I do not know, that it was run." No! Did not he that sold it, tell you it was? If he sold it under the common price, he did: the naming the price, was telling you, "This is run."

9. "But I don't know where to get tea which is not run." I will tell you where to get it. You may have it from those whose tea is duly entered, and who make a conscience of it. But were it otherwise, if I could get no wine, but what I knew to be stolen, I would drink water: yea, though not only my health, but my life depended upon it: for it is better to die than to live by thieving.

10. "But if I could get what has paid duty, I am not able to pay the price of it. And I can't live without it." I answer, 1. You can live without it, as well as your grandmother did. But, 2. If you could not live without it, you ought to die, rather than steal. For death is a less evil than sin.

11. "But my husband will buy it, whether I do or not. And I must use what he provides, or have none." Undoubtedly to have none is a less evil, than to be partaker with a thief.

IV. Upon the whole then, I exhort all of you that fear God, and desire to save your souls, without regarding what others do, resolve at all hazards, to keep yourselves pure. Let your eye be fixed on the word of God, not the examples of men. Our Lord says to every one of you, *What is that to thee? Follow thou me!* Let no convenience, no gain, no pleasure, no friend, draw you from following him. In spite of all the persuasions, all the reasonings of men, keep to the word of God. If all on the right-hand and the left will be knaves, be *you* an honest man. Probably God will repay you, (he certainly will, if this be best for you,) even with temporal blessings: there have not been wanting

remarkable instances of this. But if not, he will repay you with what is far better: with the "testimony of a good conscience toward God; with "joy in the Holy Ghost;" with an "hope full of immortality;" with the "love of God shed abroad in your hearts." And the "peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus!"

LONDON, *Jan.* 30, 1767.

A WORD TO A CONDEMNED MALEFACTOR.

WHAT a condition are you in! The sentence is past: you are condemned to die; and this sentence is to be executed shortly. You have no way to escape; these fetters, these walls, these gates and bars, these keepers, cut off all hope! Therefore die you must: but must you die like a beast, without thinking what it is *To die?* You need not: you will think a little first: you will consider, What is Death? It is leaving this world, these houses, lands, and all things under the sun; leaving all these things, never to return; your place will know you no more. It is leaving these pleasures; for there is no eating, drinking, gaming, no merriment in the grave. It is leaving your acquaintance, companions, friends; your father, mother, wife, children. You cannot stay with them, nor can they go with you; you must part; perhaps for ever. It is leaving a part of yourself; leaving this body which has accompanied you so long. Your soul must now drop its old companion, to rot and moulder into dust. It must enter upon a new, strange, unbodied state. It must stand naked before God!

2. But, O! how will you stand before God? The great, the holy, the just, the terrible GOD? Is it not his own word, "Without holiness, no man shall see the Lord?" No man shall see him with joy: rather he will call for the mountains to fall upon him, and the rocks to cover him. And what do you think holiness is? It is purity both of

heart and life. It is the mind that was in Christ, enabling us to walk as he also walked. It is the loving God with all our heart, the loving our neighbour, every man, as ourselves, and the doing to all men, in every point, as we would they should do unto us. The least part of holiness is, To do good to all men, and to do no evil either in word or work. This is only the outside of it. But this is more than you have. You are far from it; far as darkness from light. You have not the mind that was in Christ: there was no pride, no malice in him; no hatred, no revenge, no furious anger, no foolish or worldly desire. You have not walked as Christ walked: no: rather, as the devil would have walked, had he been in a body; the works of the devil you have done, not the works of God. You have not loved God with all your heart. You have not loved him at all. You have not thought about him. You hardly knew or cared whether there was any God in the world. You have not done to others as you would they should do to you; far, very far from it. Have you done all the good you could to all men? If so, you had never come to this place. You have done evil exceedingly: your sins against God and man are more than the hairs of your head. Insomuch that even the world cannot bear you; the world itself spues you out. Even the men that know not God, declare, "You are not fit to live upon the earth!"

3. O repent, repent! Know yourself: see and feel what a sinner you are. Think of the innumerable sins you have committed, even from your youth up. How many wicked words have you spoken? How many wicked actions have you done? Think of your inward sins! Your pride, malice, hatred, anger, revenge, lust. Think of your sinful nature, totally alienated from the life of God. How is your whole soul prone to evil, void of good, corrupt, full of all abominations! *Feel*, that your carnal mind is enmity against God. Well may the wrath of God abide upon you. He is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity: he hath said, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." It shall die eternally; shall be "pun[illegible]ed with everlasting destruction,

from the presence of the Lord, and the glory of his power."

4. How then can *you* escape the damnation of hell? The lake of fire burning with brimstone? Where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched? You can never redeem your own soul. You cannot atone for the sins that are past. If you could leave off sin now, and live unblamable for the time to come, that would be no atonement for what is past. Nay, if you could live like an angel for a thousand years, that would not atone for one sin. But neither can you do this: you cannot leave off sin: it has the dominion over you: if all your past sins were now to be forgiven, you would immediately sin again: that is, unless your heart were cleansed; unless it were created anew. And who can do this? Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Surely none but God. So you are utterly sinful, guilty, helpless! What can you do to be saved?

5. One thing is needful: "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved!" Believe (not as the devils only, but) with that faith which is the gift of God, which is wrought in a poor, guilty, helpless sinner, by the power of the Holy Spirit. See all thy sins on Jesus laid. God laid on him the iniquities of us all. He suffered once, the just for the unjust. He bore our sins in his own body on the tree. He was wounded for thy sins: he was bruised for thy iniquities. "Behold the Lamb of God, taking away the sin of the world!" Taking away thy sins, even thine, and reconciling thee unto God the Father! Look unto him, and be thou saved!" If thou look unto him by faith, if thou cleave to him with thy whole heart, if thou receive him both to atone, to teach, and to govern thee in all things, thou shalt be saved, thou art saved, both from the guilt, the punishment, and all the power of sin. Thou shalt have peace with God, and a peace in thy own soul, that passeth all understanding. Thy soul shall magnify the Lord, and thy spirit rejoice in God thy Saviour. The love of God shall be shed abroad in thy heart, enabling thee to

trample sin under thy feet. And thou wilt then have a hope full of immortality. Thou wilt no longer be afraid to die, but rather long for the hour, having a desire to depart, and be with Christ.

6. This is the faith that worketh by love, the way that leadeth to the kingdom. Do you earnestly desire to walk therein? Then put away all hindrances. Beware of company: at the peril of your soul, keep from those who neither know nor seek God. Your old acquaintance are no acquaintance for *you*, unless they too acquaint themselves with God. Let them laugh at you, or say, you are running mad. It is enough, if you have praise of God. Beware of strong drink. Touch it not, lest you should not know when to stop. You have no need of this to cheer your spirits; but of the peace and the love of God: beware of men that pretend to shew you the way to heaven, and know it not themselves. There is no other name whereby you can be saved, but the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. And there is no other way whereby you can find the virtue of his name, but by faith. Beware of Satan transformed into an angel of light, and telling you, it is presumption to believe in Christ, as *your* Lord and *your* God, your Wisdom and Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption. Believe in him with your whole heart. Cast your whole soul upon his love. Trust him alone: love him alone: fear him alone: and cleave to him alone: till he shall say to you, (as he did to the dying malefactor of old,) "This day shalt thou be with me in paradise!"

A WORD IN SEASON;
OR, ADVICE TO AN ENGLISHMAN.*

DO *you* ever *think?* Do *you* ever *consider?* If not, it is high time you should. *Think* a little before it is too late. *Consider* what a state you are in. And not you alone, but our *whole nation*. We *would* have war. And we have it.

* This was published at the beginning of the late Rebellion.

And what is the fruit? Our armies broken in pieces, and thousands of our men either killed on the spot or made prisoners in one day. Nor is this all. We have now war at our own doors: our own countrymen turning their swords against their brethren. And have any hitherto been able to stand before them? Have they not already seized upon one whole kingdom? Friend, either think now, or sleep on and take your rest, till you drop into the pit where you will sleep no more.

2. *Think*, what is likely to follow, if an army of French also should blow the trumpet in our land? What desolation may we not then expect! What a wide-spread field of blood! And what can the end of these things be? If they prevail, what but popery and slavery? Do you know what the spirit of Popery is? Did you never hear of that Queen Mary's reign; and of the holy men who were then burnt alive by the Papists, because they did not dare to do as they did; to worship angels and saints; to pray to the Virgin Mary; to bow down to images, and the like? If we had a king of this spirit, whose life would be safe? At least, what honest man's? A knave indeed might turn with the times; but what a dreadful thing would this be to a man of conscience! "Either turn, or burn. Either go into that fire, or into *the fire that shall never be quenched.*"

3. And can you dream that your *property* would be any safer than your conscience? Nay, how should that be? Nothing is plainer than that the Pretender cannot be King of England, unless it be by conquest. But every conqueror may do what he will. The laws of the land are no laws to him. And who can doubt, but one who should conquer England by the assistance of France, would copy after the French rules of government?

4. How dreadful then is the condition wherein we stand! On the very brink of utter destruction! But why are we thus? I am afraid the answer is too plain to every considerate man: Because of our *sins;* because we have well nigh "filled up the measure of our iniquities: for what wickedness is there under heaven, which is not found among

us at this day? Not to insist on the Sabbath-breaking in every corner of our land, the thefts, cheating, fraud, extortion, the injustice, violence, oppression, the lying and dissimulation, the robberies, sodomies, and murders, (which, with a thousand unnamed villanies, are common to us and our neighbour Christians of Holland, France, and Germany:) Consider over and above, what a plentiful harvest we have of wickedness almost peculiar to ourselves! For who can vie with us in the direction of courts of *justice?* In the management of *public charities?* Or in the *accomplished, bare-faced* wickedness, which so abounds in our prisons, and fleets, and armies? Who in Europe can compare with the sloth, laziness, luxury, and effeminacy of the English gentry? Or with the drunkenness, and stupid, senseless cursing and swearing, which are daily seen and heard in our streets; one great inlet, no doubt, to that flood of perjury, which so *increases* among us day by day; the like whereunto is not to be found in any other part of the habitable earth.

5. Add to these, (what is indeed the source as well as completion of all; that open and professed DEISM and *Rejection* of the Gospel, that public, avowed Apostasy from the Christian Faith which reigns among the rich and great, and hath spread from them to all ranks and orders of men, (the vulgar themselves not excepted,) and made us a people fitted for "the destroyer of the Gentiles."

6. Because of these sins is this evil come upon us: for (whether you are aware of it or not) there is a GOD; a GOD, who though he sits upon the circle of the heavens, sees and knows all that is done upon earth. And this God is holy: he does not love sin: he is just, rendering to all their due: and he is strong: there is none able to withstand him: he has all power in heaven and in earth: he is patient indeed, and suffers long; but he will at last repay the wicked to his face: he often does so in this world; especially when a whole nation is *openly* and *insolently* wicked. Then doth God "arise and maintain his own cause;" then doth he terribly shew both his justice and power; that if

these will not repent, yet others may fear, and flee from the wrath to come.

7. There hath been among them that feared God, a general expectation for many years, that the time was coming, when God would thus arise, to be avenged on this sinful nation. At length the time is come. The patience of God, long provoked, gives place to justice. The windows of heaven begin to be opened, to rain down judgments on the earth. And yet, with what tenderness does he proceed! In the midst of wrath remembering mercy. By how slow degrees does his vengeance move! Nor does his whole displeasure yet arise.

8. Brethren, Countrymen, Englishmen, what shall we do! To-day, while it is called to-day! before the season of mercy is quite expired, and our "destruction cometh as a whirlwind?" Which way can we remove the evils we feel? Which way prevent those we fear? Is there any better way than the making God our Friend? The securing his help against our enemies? Other helps are little worth. We see armies may be destroyed, or even flee away from old men and children. Fleets may be dashed to pieces in an hour, and sunk in the depth of the sea. Allies may be treacherous, or slow, or foolish, or weak, or cowardly. But God is a Friend who cannot betray, and whom none can either bribe or terrify. And who is wise, or swift, or strong like him? Therefore, whatever we do, let us make God our Friend: let us with all speed remove the cause of his anger: let us cast away our sins: then shall his love have free course, and he will send us help, sufficient help against all our enemies.

9. Come; will *you* begin? Will *you*, by the grace of God, amend *one*, and that without delay? First then, *own* those sins which have long cried for vengeance in the ears of God. *Confess*, that we and all (and *you* in particular) deserve for our inward and outward abominations, not only to be swept from the face of the earth, but to suffer the vengeance of eternal fire. Never aim at *excusing* either yourself or others. Let your mouth be stopped. Plead guilty

before God. Above all, *own* that *impudence* of wickedness, that utter *carelessness*, that *pert* stupidity, which is hardly to be found in any part of the earth, (at least, not in such a degree,) except in England. Do you not know what I mean? You were not long since praying to God for "damnation upon your soul." One who heard you, said, "Is that right?" Does not God hear? What if he takes you at your word?" You replied, with equal *impudence* and *ignorance*, "What, are you a *Methodist?*"—What, if he is a *Turk?* Must thou therefore be a *Heathen?*—God humble thy *brutish*, *devilish* spirit.

10. Lay thee in the dust for this, and for all thy sins. Let thy laughter be turned into heaviness, thy joy into mourning, thy senseless jollity and mirth into sorrow and brokenness of heart. This is no time "to eat and drink, and rise up to play;" but to afflict thy soul before the Lord. Desire of God a deep, piercing sense of the enormous sins of the nation, and of thy own. Remember that great example; how when the king of Ninevah was warned of the near approaching vengeance of God, he caused it to be proclaimed, "Let none taste any thing; let them not feed, nor drink water: but let them be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily to God; yea, let them turn every one from his evil way: who can tell, if God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not," Jonah iii.

11. Let them *turn* every one from his evil way. Cease to do evil. Learn to do well. And see that this Reformation be *universal;* for there is no serving God by halves. Avoid *all* evil, and do *all* good unto *all* men; else you only deceive your soul. See also, that it be from the *heart*. Lay the axe to the root of the tree. Cut up, by the grace of God, evil desire, pride, anger, unbelief. Let this be your continual prayer to God, the prayer of your heart, (as well as lips,) "Lord, I *would* believe; help thou mine unbelief! Give me the faith that worketh by love. 'The life which I now live,' let me 'live by faith in the Son of God.' Let me *so believe*, that I may 'love thee with all my heart, and

mind, and soul, and strength!' And that I may love every child of man, even 'as thou hast loved us!' Let me daily 'add to my faith, courage, knowledge, temperance, patience, brotherly-kindness, charity; that so an entrance may be administered to me abundantly, into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.'"

LONDON, 1745.

A WORD TO A PROTESTANT.

1. DON'T *you* call yourself a Protestant? Why so? Do you know what the word means? What is a Protestant? I suppose you mean one that is not a Papist. But what is a Papist? If you don't know, say so. Acknowledge you cannot tell. Is not this the case? You call yourself a Protestant: but you don't know what a Protestant is. You talk against Papists: and yet neither do you know what a Papist is. Why do you *pretend* then to the knowledge which you have not? Why do you use words which you don't understand?

2. Are you desirous to know what these words, Papist and Protestant mean? A Papist is one who holds the Pope, or Bishop of Rome, (the name *Papa*, that is, *Father*, was formerly given to all Bishops,) to be head of the whole Christian Church: and the Church of Rome, or that which owns the Pope as their head, to be the only Christian Church.

3. In a course of years, many errors crept into this church, of which good men complained from time to time. At last, about two hundred years ago, the Pope appointed many Bishops and others to meet at a town in Germany, called Trent. But these, instead of amending those errors, established them all by a law, and so delivered them down to all succeeding generations.

4. Among these errors may be numbered, their doctrine of seven sacraments; of transubstantiation; of communion

in one kind only; of purgatory, and praying for the dead therein; of veneration of relics; and of indulgences, or pardons granted by the Pope, and to be bought for money.

It is thought by some, that these errors, great as they are, do only defile the purity of Christianity: but it is sure the following strike at its very root, and tend to banish true religion out of the world.

5. First, the doctrine of *Merit*. The very foundation of Christianity is, that a man can *merit* nothing of God: that we are justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ: not for any of our works, or of our deservings; but by faith in the blood of the covenant.

But the Papists hold, that a man may, by his works, *merit* or deserve eternal life; and that we are justified, not by faith in Christ alone, but by faith and works together.

This doctrine strikes at the root of Christian faith, the only foundation of true religion.

6. Secondly, the doctrine of *praying* to saints, and *worshipping* of images. To the Virgin Mary they pray in these words, "O Mother of God, O Queen of Heaven, command thy Son to have mercy upon us." And "the right use of images (says the council of Trent) is to honour them, by *bowing down* before them." Sess. 25. Par. 2.

This doctrine strikes at the root of that great commandment, (which the Papists call part of the first,) "Thou shalt not bow down to them, nor worship them," i. e. not any image whatsoever. It is gross, open, palpable *idolatry*, such as can neither be denied, nor excused; and tends directly to destroy the love of God, which is indeed the first and great commandment.

7. Thirdly, The doctrine of *Persecution*. This has been for many ages a favourite doctrine of the Church of Rome. And the Papists in general still maintain, That "all heretics (that is, all who differ from them) ought to be *compelled* to receive what they call the *true faith*: to be *forced* into the church, or out of the world."

Now this strikes at the root of, and utterly tears up, the second great commandment. It directly tends to bring in

blind, bitter zeal; anger, hatred, malice, variance; every temper, word, and work, that is just contrary to the loving our neighbour as ourselves.

So plain it is, that these grand Popish doctrines of *Merit*, *Idolatry*, and *Persecution*, by destroying both faith and the love of God and of our neighbour, tend to banish true Christianity out of the world.

8. Well might our forefathers *protest* against these: and hence it was that they were called *Protestants*: even because they publicly *protested*, as against all the errors of the Papists, so against these three in particular: the making void Christian faith, by holding that man may *merit* heaven by his own works, the overthrowing the love of God by *idolatry*, and the love of our neighbour by *persecution*.

Are *you* then a Protestant, truly so called? do you *protest*, as against all the rest, so in particular, against these three grand, fundamental errors of Popery? Do you publicly *protest* against all *merit* in man? all *salvation* by our own *works*? against all *idolatry* of every sort? and against every kind and degree of *persecution*?

I question not but you do. You *publicly protest* against all these horrible errors of Popery. But does your heart agree with your lips? Do you not *inwardly* cherish what you *outwardly* renounce? It is well, if *you*, who cry out so much against Papists, are not one *yourself*. It is well if you are not *yourself* (as little as you may think it) a rank Papist at the heart.

9. For, first, How do you hope to be saved? By doing thus and thus? By doing no harm, and paying every man his own, and saying your prayers, and going to church and sacrament? Alas! alas! Now you have thrown off the mask. This is Popery barefaced. You may just as well speak plainly, and say, "I trust to be saved by the *merit* of my own works." But where is Christ all this time? Why, he is not to come in till the end of your *prayer*. And then you will say, for Jesus Christ's sake, because so it stands in your book. O my friend, your very foundation is popish. *You* seek salvation by your own *works*. You trample upon

the "blood of the covenant." And what can a poor Papist do more?

10. But let us go on. Are you clear of idolatry any more than the Papists are? It may be indeed yours is in a different way. But how little does that signify! They set up their idols in their *churches:* you set up yours in your *heart.* Their idols are only *covered with gold* or *silver:* yours is *solid gold.* They worship the picture of the Queen of *heaven;* you, the picture of the Queen or King of *England.* In another way, they idolize a dead man or woman; whereas your idol is yet alive. O how little is the difference before God! How small pre-eminence has the money-worshipper at London over the image-worshipper at Rome! Or the idolizer of a living sinner, over him that prays to a dead saint!

11. Take one step further. Does the Papist abroad *persecute?* Does he *force* another man's conscience? So does the Papist at home, as far as he can; for all he calls himself a Protestant. Will the man in Italy *tolerate* no opinion but his own? No more, if he could help it, would the man in England. Would you? Do not you think the government much overseen, in *bearing* with any but those of the *church?* Do not you wish, they would *put down* such and such people? You know what *you* would do, if you were in their place. And by the very same spirit you would continue the inquisition at Rome, and rekindle the fires in Smithfield.

12. It is because our nation is overrun with *such* Protestants, who are full of their own *good deservings,* as well as of abominable *idolatry,* and of blind, fiery zeal, of the whole spirit of *Persecution;* that the sword of God, the great, the just, the jealous God, is even now drawn in our land: that the armies of the aliens are hovering over it, as a vulture over his prey; and that the *open* Papists are on the very point of swallowing up the *pretended* Protestants.

13. Do you desire to escape the scourge of God? Then I intreat you, first, Be a *real* Protestant. By the Spirit of God assisting you, (for without him you know you

can do nothing,) cast away all that *trust* in your own righteousness, all hope of being saved by your own works. Own, your *merit* is everlasting damnation; that you *deserve* the damnation of hell. Humble yourself under the mighty hand of God. Lie in the dust. Let your mouth be stopped. And let all your confidence be in the "blood of sprinkling;" all your hope in Jesus Christ *the righteous;* all your faith in "him that justifieth the ungodly, through the redemption that is in Jesus."

O put away your *idols* out of your heart. "Love not the world, neither the things of the world." Having food to eat and raiment to put on, be content: desire nothing more but God. To-day, hear his voice, who continually cries, "My son, give me thy heart." Give yourself to him, who gave himself for *you*. May you love God, as he has loved us! Let him be your desire, your delight, your joy, your portion, in time and in eternity.

And if you love God, you *will* love your brother also: you will be ready to lay down your life for his sake; so far from any desire to take away his life, or to hurt a hair of his head. You will then leave his *conscience* uncontrolled: you will no more think of *forcing* him into your own opinions, as neither can he force *you*, to judge by *his* conscience. But each shall "give an account of himself to God."

14. It is true, if his conscience be misinformed, you should endeavour to inform him better. But whatever you do, let it be done in charity, in love and meekness of wisdom. Be zealous for God: but remember, that "the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God:" that angry zeal, though opposing sin, is the servant of sin; that true zeal is only the flame of love. Let this be your truly Protestant zeal: while you abhor every kind and degree of *persecution*, let your heart burn with love to all mankind, to friends and enemies, neighbours and strangers; to Christians, Heathens, Jews, Turks, Papists, heretics, to every soul which God hath made. "Let this your light shine before men that they may glorify your Father which is in heaven."

IX.

A WORD TO A FREEHOLDER.

WHAT are you going to do? To vote for a Parliament man? I hope then you have taken no money. For doubtless you know the strictness of the oath, That you have received no "*Gift or Reward, directly or indirectly, nor any Promise of any, on account of your Vote*" in the ensuing election. Surely you start at *Perjury!* at calm, forethought, deliberate, wilful Perjury! If you are guilty already, Stop. Go no farther. It is at the peril of your soul. Will you sell your country? Will you sell your own soul? Will you sell your God, your Saviour? Nay, God forbid! Rather cast down just now the thirty pieces of silver or gold, and say, "Sir, I will not sell Heaven. Neither you, nor all the world, is able to pay the purchase."

I hope you have received nothing else, neither will receive; no entertainment, no meat or drink. If this be *given* you on account of your vote, you are perjured still. How can you make oath you have received no *gift?** This was a gift, if you did not buy it. What, will you sell your soul to the devil for a draught of drink, or for a morsel of bread? Oh consider what you do. Act as if the whole election depended on your single vote: and as if the whole parliament (and therein the whole nation) depended on that single person whom you now choose to be a member of it.

But if you can take nothing of any, for whom shall you vote? For the man that loves God. He must love his country, and that from a steady, invariable principle. And by his fruits you shall know him. He is careful to abstain from all appearance of evil. He is zealous of good works, as he has opportunity, doing good to all men. He uses all the ordinances of God, and that both constantly and carefully. And he does this, not barely as something he *must* do; or what he would willingly be excused from. No; he

* The *bare* allowing your expense for loss of time and business is not bribery.

rejoices in this his reasonable service, as a blessed privilege of the children of God.

But what if none of the candidates have these fruits? Then vote for him that loves the King; *King George*, whom the wise providence of God has appointed to reign over us. He ought to be highly esteemed in love, even for his office-sake. A KING is a lovely, sacred name. He is a minister of God unto thee for good. How much more, *such* a King, who is a blessing to his subjects. You may easily know those who love him not. For they generally glory in their shame. They are not afraid to *speak evil* of dignities: no, not even of the *Ruler of their people.*

Perhaps you will say, "But I love my Country: therefore I am for the *Country-Interest.*" I fear, you know not what you say. Are you against your King, because you love your Country? Who taught you to separate your king from your country? To set one against the other? Be assured, none that loves either. True lovers of their country do not talk in this senseless manner.

Is not the interest of the king of England and of the country of England, one and the same? If the king is destroyed, does it profit the country? If the country, does it profit the king? Their interest cannot be divided. The welfare of *one* is the welfare of *both.*

Have you an objection of a different kind? Do you say, "I am for the *Church?* The Church of England for ever! Therefore I vote for ——. He is a true *Churchman*, a lover of the Church." Are you sure of that? Friend, think a little. What kind of a Churchman is he? A whoring Churchman? A gaming Churchman? A drunken Churchman? A lying Churchman? A cursing and swearing Churchman, or a red-hot, persecuting Churchman, that would send all dissenters to the devil at a clap? For shame, for shame! Do you call a man a Churchman, who knows no more of God than a Turk? Call a man a Churchman that does not even *pretend* to so much religion as would serve an honest Heathen? He is a lover of the Church, who is a lover of God, and consequently of all

mankind. Whoever else talks of loving the Church, is a cheat. Set a mark upon that man.

Above all, mark that man who talks of loving the Church, and does not love the King. If he does not love the king, he cannot love God. And if he does not love God, he cannot love the Church. He loves the Church and the King just alike. For indeed he loves neither one nor the other.

O beware, you who truly love the Church, and therefore cannot but love the King: beware of dividing the King and the Church, any more than the King and Country. Let others do as they will, what is that to you? Act you as an honest man, a loyal subject, a true Englishman, a lover of the country, a lover of the church; in one word, A Christian! One that fears nothing but Sin, that seeks nothing but Heaven, and that desires nothing but God. Nothing but glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will towards men!

X.

A WORD IN SEASON; OR, ADVICE TO A SOLDIER.

Fight the good fight of faith: Lay hold of eternal life!

ARE you to die? Must you leave this world, and carry nothing of it away with you? Naked as you came out of your mother's womb, naked shall you return. And are you never to come back into this world? Have you no more place under the sun? When you leave these houses and fields, this flesh and blood, do you part with them for ever? Are you sure of this? Must all men die? Can none at all escape death? Do rich men likewise die, and leave their riches for others? Do Princes also fall and die like one of their people? Can you then escape it? You do not think so. You know death is as sure as if you felt it already; as if you were now gasping for life, sweating and trembling in those last pangs, till the soul started off from the quivering lips, into the boundless ocean of eternity.

And are you to be judged? How is this to be? Why "the Son of God shall come in his glory, and all his holy

angels with him; and then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory. And before him shall be gathered all nations, and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats." "Behold, he cometh with clouds! and every eye shall see him, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty! And I saw (wilt thou also say) a great white throne, and Him that sat thereon, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away, and there was found no place for them, And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God, and they were judged every man according to his works." And shalt thou also be judged according to thy works? All thy works, whether they be good or evil? Yea, and for every idle word which thou shalt speak, thou shalt give an account in the day of judgment. But this is not all. The Lord, the Judge, searcheth the heart, and trieth the reins. He understandeth all thy thoughts; and for all these likewise he shall bring thee into judgment. Supposest thou, it is enough to be outwardly good? What! though thy inward parts are very wickedness? And are they not? Is not thy soul fallen short of the glory (the glorious image) of God? Look into thy breast. Art thou not a fallen spirit? Dost thou not know and feel how very far thou art gone from original righteousness? How desperately full thou art of all evil, and destitute of all good? Is there not in thee an earthly, sensual, devilish mind? A mind that is enmity against God? It is plain there is. For thou dost not love God. Thou dost not delight in him. He is not the desire of thy eyes, or the joy of thy heart. Thou lovest the creature more than the Creator. Thou art a lover of pleasure more than a lover of God. O how wilt thou stand in the judgment!

Are you then to go to heaven or hell? It must be either one or the other. I pray to God you may not go to hell! For who can dwell with everlasting burnings? Who can bear the fierceness of the flame, without even a drop of water to cool his tongue? Yea, and that without end; for as the worm dieth not, so the fire is not quenched. No,

whoever is cast into that lake of fire, shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever. O Eternity, Eternity! Who can tell the length of Eternity? I warn thee now, before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, that thou come not into that place of torment!

But, alas! is not hell now begun in thy soul? Does thy conscience never awake? Hast thou no remorse at any time? No sense of guilt? No dread of the wrath of God? Why, these (if thou art not saved from them in this life) are the worm that never dieth. And what else is thy carnal mind? Thy enmity against God? Thy foolish and hurtful lusts? Thy inordinate affections? What are pride, envy, malice, revenge? Are they not vipers gnawing thy heart? May they not well be called, *The dogs of hell?* Canst thou be out of hell, whilst they are in thy soul? While they are tearing it in pieces, and there is none to help thee? Indeed they are not fully let loose upon thee. And while thou seest the light of the sun, the things of the world that surround thee, or the pleasures of sense divert thy thoughts from them. But when thou canst eat and drink no more, when the earth with the works thereof, is burnt up, when the sun is fallen from heaven, and thou art shut up in utter darkness, what a state wilt thou be in then! Mayest thou never try: seek thou a better habitation, a house of God eternal in the heavens.

"There the wicked cease from troubling, there the weary are at rest: For God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes. And there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying; neither shall there be any more pain, but everlasting joy upon their heads." But this joy our ears have not heard, neither has it entered into the heart of man to conceive. Yet a little of it the children of God can conceive, from what they already enjoy. For the kingdom of heaven is within them. God has given them eternal life; the life which is hid with CHRIST IN GOD. They have heaven upon earth; righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. Their souls are renewed in the image of God. They love God with all their hearts. They are

happy in him. And they love their neighbour (that is every man) as themselves, as their own souls. Being justified by faith, they have peace with God, yea, a peace which passeth all understanding. And they rejoice evermore, knowing their sins are blotted out; that they are accepted in the Beloved, and that they are going to an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away.

Will you reply to all this, "But I am a soldier, and have therefore nothing to do with these things?" Hold! Have Soldiers nothing to do with death? How so? Do soldiers never die? Can you fight death away? No, my friend: he will not regard all your big words and looks, nor all the weapons of your warfare. You can neither conquer nor escape him. Your profession may excuse you from many other things, but there is no excusing yourself from death. Are you less sure of this than other men are? No. There is one lot for all. Are you farther from it than they? Nay, rather nearer. You live in the very jaws of death. Why, then, a soldier (if there be any difference) has more to do with death than other men. It is not far from every one of us; but to him it is just at the door.

Or do you fancy a soldier has nothing to do with judgment? Will you say then (as poor Captain Uratz did, when he asked a few minutes before his death, If he had made his peace with God?) "I hope God will deal with me like a gentleman." But God said unto him, "Thou fool! I will deal with thee as with all mankind. There is no respect of persons with me. I reward every man according to his works." Thou also shalt receive of the righteous Judge according to the things which thou hast done in the body. Death levels all; it mingles into one dust the gentleman, soldier, clown, and beggar. It makes all these distinctions void. When life ends, so do they. Holy or unholy, is the one question then. Lo! the books are opened, that all the dead may be judged, according to the things that are written therein! O may thy name be found written in the Book of Life!

Or have soldiers nothing to do with hell? Why then is it

so often in *thy* mouth? Dost thou think God does not hear the prayer? And how often hast thou prayed him to *damn thy soul?* Is his ear waxed heavy that it cannot hear? I fear thou wilt find it otherwise. Was not he a soldier too (and a terrible one) to whom God said of old, "Hell from beneath is moved for thee, to meet thee at thy coming?" And what marvel? For sin is the high road to hell. And have soldiers nothing to do with sin? Alas! How many of you wallow therein; yea, and glory in your shame! How do you labour to work out your own damnation! O poor work, for poor wages! The wages of sin is death; the wages of cursing, of taking the Name of God in vain, of sabbath-breaking, drunkenness, revenge, of fornication, adultery, and all uncleanness. Now art thou clear of these? Does not thine own heart smite thee? Art thou not condemned already? What voice is that which sounds in thine ears? Is it not the voice of God? "Shall I not visit for these things saith the Lord? Shall not my soul be avenged on such a sinner as this?" It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God! Be very sure that thou art stronger than He, before thou fliest in his face. Do not defy God, unless thou canst overcome Him. But canst thou indeed? O no. Do not try: do not dare him to do his worst. Why should he destroy both thy body and soul in hell? Why shouldst thou be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.

But if there were no other hell, thou hast hell within thee. An awakened conscience is hell. Pride, envy, wrath, hatred, malice, revenge, what are these? Hell upon earth. And how often art thou tormented in these flames? Flames of lust, envy, or proud wrath! Are not these to thy soul, when blown up to the height, as it were a lake of fire, burning with brimstone? Flee away before the great gulf is fixed: Escape, escape for thy life! If thou hast not strength, cry to God, and thou shalt receive power from on high: and He, whose name is rightly called Jesus, shall save thee from thy sins.

And why should he not? Has a soldier nothing to do with heaven? God forbid that you should think so! Heaven was designed for *you* also. God so loved *your* soul, that He gave his only begotten Son, that you, believing in Him, might not perish, but have everlasting life. Receive then the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world! This, this is the time to make it sure; this short, uncertain day of life! Have you then an hour to spare? No, not a moment: Arise, and call upon thy God. Call upon the Lamb, who taketh away the sins of the world, to take away thy sins. Surely he hath borne *thy* griefs, and carried *thy* sorrows! He was wounded for *thy* transgressions, and bruised for *thy* iniquities. He hath paid the ransom for *thy* soul. Believe in Him, and thou shalt be saved. Art thou a sinner? He came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. Art thou a lost, undone sinner? He came to seek and to save that which was lost. May he that gave himself for thee, give thee ears to hear, and a heart to understand his love! So shalt thou also say, "The life I now live, I live by faith in the Son of God." So shall the love of God be shed abroad in *thy* heart, and thou shalt rejoice with joy unspeakable. Thou shalt have the mind that was in Christ, and thou shalt so walk as He also walked: till having fought the good fight, and finished thy course, thou receive the crown that fadeth not away!

SERIOUS THOUGHTS

OCCASIONED BY THE LATE

EARTHQUAKE AT LISBON.

Tua res agitur, paries quum proximus ardet.

THINKING men generally allow that the greater part of modern Christians are not more virtuous than the ancient Heathens: perhaps less so; since public spirit, love of our country, generous honesty, and simple truth, are scarce any where to be found. On the contrary, covetousness, ambition, various injustice, luxury, and falsehood in every kind, have infected every rank and denomination of people, the clergy themselves not excepted. Now they who believe there is a God are apt to believe, he is not well pleased with this. Nay, they think, he has intimated it very plainly, in many parts of the Christian world. How many hundreds of thousands of men have been swept away by war, in Europe only, within half a century! How many thousands, within little more than this, hath the earth opened her mouth and swallowed up! Numbers sunk at Port-Royal, and rose no more. Many thousands went quick into the pit at Lima. The whole city of Catanea, in Sicily, and every inhabitant of it perished together. Nothing but heaps of ashes and cinders shew where it stood. Not so much as one Lot escaped out of Sodom!

And what shall we say of the late accounts from Portugal? That some thousands of houses, and many thousands of persons are no more! That a fair city is now in ruinous heaps. Is there indeed a God that judges the world? And is he now making inquisition for blood? If so, it is not surprising, he should begin there, where so much blood has

been poured on the ground like water? Where so many brave men have been murdered, in the most base and cowardly, as well as barbarous manner, almost every day, as well as every night, while none regarded or laid it to heart. "Let them hunt and destroy the precious life, so we may secure our stores * of gold and precious stones." How long has their blood been crying from the earth? Yea, how long has that bloody *house of mercy* †, the scandal not only of all religion, but even of human nature, stood to insult both heaven and earth? "And shall I not visit for these things, saith the Lord? Shall not my soul be avenged of such a city as this?"

It has been the opinion of many, that even this nation has not been without some marks of God's displeasure. Has not war been let loose even within our own land, so that London itself felt the alarm? Has not a pestilential sickness broken in upon our cattle, and in many parts, left not one of them alive? And although the earth does not yet open in England or Ireland, has it not shook, and reeled to and fro like a drunken man? And that not in one or two places only, but almost from one end of the kingdom to the other?

Perhaps one might ask, Was there nothing uncommon, nothing more than is usual at this season of the year, in the rains, the hail, the winds, the thunder and lightning, which we have lately heard and seen? Particularly, in the storm which was the same day and hour, that they were playing off Macbeth's thunder and lightning at the theatre. One would almost think they designed this (inasmuch as the entertainment continued, notwithstanding all the artillery of heaven) as a formal answer to that question, "Canst thou thunder with an arm like him?"

* Merchants who have lived in Portugal inform us, that the king had a large building filled with diamonds: and more gold stored up, coined and uncoined, than all the other princes of Europe together.

† The title which the *Inquisition* of Portugal (if not in other countries also) takes to itself.

What shall we say to the affair of Whiston Cliffs? Of which, were it not for the unparalleled stupidity of the English, all England would have rang long ago, from one sea to another. And yet seven miles from the place, they knew little more of it in May last, than if it had happened in China or Japan.

The fact (of the truth of which any who will be at the pains of inquiring, may soon be satisfied) is this. On Tuesday, March 25th last, being the week before Easter, many persons heard a great noise near a ridge of mountains called Black Hamilton, in Yorkshire. It was observed chiefly on the south west side of the mountain, about a mile from the course where the Hamilton races are run, near a ledge of rocks, commonly called Whiston Cliffs, two miles from Sutton, and about five from Thirsk.

The same noise was heard on Wednesday by all who went that way. On Thursday, about seven in the morning, Edward Abbot, weaver, and Adam Bosomworth, bleacher, both of Sutton, riding under Whiston Cliffs, heard a *roaring* (so they termed it) like many cannons, or loud and rolling thunder. It seemed to come from the cliffs: looking up to which, they saw a large body of stone, four or five yards broad, split and fly off from the very top of the rock. They thought it strange, but rode on. Between ten and eleven, a larger piece of the rock, about fifteen yards thick, thirty high, and between sixty and seventy broad, was torn off and thrown into the valley.

About seven in the evening, one who was riding by, observed the ground to shake exceedingly, and soon after, several large stones or rocks of some tons weight each, rose out of the ground. Others were thrown on one side, others turned upside down, and many rolled over and over. Being a little surprised, and not very curious, he hasted on his way.

On Friday and Saturday the ground continued to shake, and the rocks to roll over one another. The earth also clave asunder in very many places, and continued so to do till Sunday morning.

Being at Osmotherly, seven miles from the cliffs, on Monday, June 1, and finding Edward Abbot there, I desired him the next morning to shew me the way thither. I walked, crept, and climbed round and over great part of the ruins. I could not perceive by any sign, that there was ever any cavity in the rock at all; but one part of the solid stone is cleft from the rest in a perpendicular line, and as smooth as if cut with instruments. Nor is it barely thrown down, but split into many hundred pieces, some of which lie four or five hundred yards from the main rock.

The ground nearest the cliff, is not raised, but sunk considerably beneath the level. But at some distance it is raised in a ridge of eight or ten yards high, twelve or fifteen broad, and near a hundred long. Adjoining to this lies an oval piece of ground thirty or forty yards in diameter, which has been removed whole as it is, from beneath the cliff, without the least fissure, with all its load of rocks, some of which were as large as the hull of a small ship. At a little distance is a second piece of ground, forty or fifty yards across, which has been also transplanted entire, with rocks of various sizes upon it, and a tree growing out of one of them. By the removal of one or both of these, I suppose the hollow near the cliff was made.

All round them lay stones and rocks, great and small, some on the surface of the earth, some half sunk into it, some almost covered, in variety of positions. Between these the ground was cleft asunder in a thousand places. Some of the apertures were nearly closed again, some gaping as at first. Between thirty and forty acres of land, as is commonly supposed, (though some reckon above sixty) are in this condition.

On the skirts of these, I observed in abundance of places, the green turf (for it was pasture land) as it were pared off, two or three inches thick, and wrapt round like sheets of lead. A little farther it was not cleft or broken at all, but raised in ridges, five or six feet long, exactly resembling the graves in a church-yard. Of these there is a vast number.

That part of the cliff from which the rest is torn, lies so high and is now of so bright a colour, that it is plainly visible to all the country round, even at the distance of several miles. We saw it distinctly not only from the street in Thirsk, but for five or six miles after, as we rode towards York. So we did likewise, in the great North road, between Sandhutton and Northallerton.

But how may we account for this phenomenon? Was it effected by a merely natural cause? If so, that cause must either have been fire, water, or air. It could not be fire; for then some mark of it must have appeared, either at the time, or after it. But no such mark does appear, nor ever did: not so much as the least smoke, either when the first or second rock was removed, or in the whole space between Tuesday and Sunday.

It could not be water; for no water issued out, when the one or the other rock was torn off. Nor had there been any rains for some time before. It was in that part of the country a remarkably dry season. Neither was there any cavity in that part of the rock, wherein a sufficient quantity of water might have lodged. On the contrary, it was one, single, solid mass, which was evenly and smoothly cleft in sunder.

There remains no other natural cause assignable, but imprisoned air. I say, *imprisoned:* for as to the fashionable opinion, that the exterior air is the grand agent in earthquakes, it is so senseless, unmechanical, unphilosophical a dream, as deserves not to be named, but to be exploded. But it is hard to conceive, how even imprisoned air could produce such an effect. It might indeed shake, tear, raise, or sink the earth, but how could it cleave a solid rock? Here was not room for a quantity of it, sufficient to do any thing of this nature; at least, unless it had been suddenly and violently expanded by fire, which was not the case. Could a small quantity of air, without that violent expansion, have torn so large a body of rock from the rest, to which it adhered in one solid mass? Could it have shivered this into pieces, and scattered several of those pieces

some hundreds of yards round? Could it have transported those promontories of earth, with their incumbent load, and set them down unbroken, unchanged at a distance? Truly I am not so great a volunteer in faith, as to be able to believe this. He that supposes this, must suppose air to be not only very strong, (which we allow) but a very wise agent; while it bore its charge with so great caution, as not to hurt or dislocate any part of it.

What then could be the cause? What indeed, but God, who arose to shake terribly the earth: who purposely chose such a place, where there is so great a concourse of nobility and gentry every year; and wrought in such a manner, that many might see it and fear, that all who travel one of the most frequented roads in England, might see it, almost whether they would or not, for many miles together. It must likewise for many years, maugre all the heart of man, be a visible monument of his power. All that ground being now so incumbered with rocks and stones, that it cannot be either ploughed or grazed. Nor can it well serve any use, but to tell all that see it, Who can stand before this great God?

Who can account for the late motion in the waters? Not only that of the sea, and rivers communicating therewith, but even that in canals, fishponds, cisterns, and all either large or small bodies of water? It was particularly observed, that while the water itself was so violently agitated, neither did the earth shake at all, nor any of the vessels which contained that water. Was such a thing ever known or heard of before! I know not, but it was spoken of once, near eighteen hundred years ago, in those remarkable words, "There shall be σεισμοι (not only *earthquakes*, but various *concussions* or *shakings*) in divers places. And so there have been in Spain, in Portugal, in Italy, in Holland, in England, in Ireland; and not improbably in many other places too, which we are not yet informed of. Yet it does not seem, that a concussion of this kind, has ever been known before, since either the same, or some other comet revolved so near the earth. For we know of no other

natural cause in the universe, which is adequate to such an effect. And that this is the real cause, we may very possibly be convinced in a short time.

But, alas! why should we not be convinced sooner, while that conviction may avail, that it is not chance which governs the world? Why should we not now, before London is as Lisbon, Lima, or Catanea, acknowledge the hand of the Almighty, arising to maintain his own cause? Why, we have a general answer always ready, to screen us from any such conviction: "All these things are purely natural and accidental; the result of natural causes." But there are two objections to this answer: first, it is untrue; secondly, it is uncomfortable.

First, If by affirming, "All this is purely natural," you mean, it is not providential, or that God has nothing to do with it, this is not true, that is, supposing the bible to be true. For supposing this, you may discant ever so long on the natural causes of murrain, winds, thunder, lightning, and yet you are altogether wide of the mark, you prove nothing at all, unless you can prove, that God never works in or by natural causes. But this you cannot prove, nay none can doubt of his so working, who allows the Scripture to be of God. For this asserts in the clearest and strongest terms that *all things* (in nature) *serve him:* that (by or without a train of natural causes) he "sendeth his rain on the earth," that he "bringeth the winds out of his treasures," and "maketh a way for the lightning and the thunder:" in general, that "fire and hail, snow and vapour, wind and storm, fulfil his word." Therefore, allowing there are natural causes of all these, they are still under the direction of the Lord of nature. Nay, what is nature itself but the art of God? Or God's method of acting in the material world? True philosophy therefore ascribes all to God, and says, in the beautiful language of the wise and good man,

Here, like a trumpet, loud and strong,
Thy thunder shakes our coast;

While the red lightnings wave along,
The banners of *thy host.*

A second objection to your answer is, it is extremely uncomfortable. For if things really be as you affirm, if all these afflictive incidents, entirely depend on the fortuitous concourse and agency of blind, material causes; what hope, what help, what resource is left, for the poor sufferers by them? Should the murrain among the cattle continue a few years longer, and consequently produce scarcity or famine; what will there be left for many of the poor to do, but to lie down and die? If tainted air spread a pestilence over our land, where shall they flee for succour? They cannot resist either the one or other. They cannot escape from them. And can they hope to appease

Illacrymabilem Plutona?
"Inexorable Pluto, king of shades?"

Shall they entreat the famine or the pestilence to shew mercy? Alas, they are as senseless as you suppose God to be.

However, you who are men of fortune, can shift tolerably well, in spite of the difficulties. Your money will undoubtedly procure you food as long as there is any in the kingdom. And if your physicians cannot secure you from the epidemic disease, your coaches can carry you from the place of infection. Be it so: but you are not out of all danger yet; unless you can drive faster than the wind. Are you sure of this? And are your horses literally swifter than the lightning? Can they leave the panting storm behind? If not, what will you do when it overtakes you? Try your eloquence on the whirlwind? Will it hear your voice? Will it regard either your money, or prayers, or tears? Call upon the lightning. Cry aloud. See whether *your* voice will *divide the flames of fire?* O no! It hath no ears to hear. It devoureth and sheweth no pity.

But this is not all. Here is a nearer enemy. The earth threatens to swallow you up. Where is your protection now? What defence do you find from thousands of gold

and silver? You cannot fly; for you cannot quit the earth, unless you will leave your dear body behind you. And while you are on the earth, you know not whither to flee to, neither whither to flee from. You may buy intelligence, where the shock was yesterday, but not where it will be to-morrow—to-day. It comes! The roof trembles! The beams crack. The ground rocks to and fro. Hoarse thunder resounds from the bowels of the earth. And all these are but the beginning of sorrows. Now what help? What wisdom can prevent? What strength resist the blow? What money can purchase, I will not say, deliverance, but an hour's reprieve? Poor honourable fool, where are now thy titles? Wealthy fool, where is now thy golden god? If any thing can help, it must be prayer. But what wilt thou pray to? Not to the God of heaven: you suppose him to have nothing to do with earthquakes. No: they proceed in a merely natural way, either from the earth itself, or from included air, or from subterraneous fires or waters. If thou prayest then (which perhaps you never did before) it must be to some of these. Begin. "O earth, earth, earth, hear the voice of thy children. Hear, O air, water, fire!" And will they hear? You know, it cannot be. How deplorable then is his condition, who in such an hour has none else to flee to? How uncomfortable the supposition, which implies this, by direct necessary consequence, namely, that all these things are the pure result of merely natural causes!

But supposing the earthquake which made such havock at Lisbon, should never travel so far as London, is there nothing else which can reach us? What think you of a comet? Are we absolutely out of the reach of this? You cannot say we are; seeing these move in all directions, and through every region of the universe. And would the approach of one of these amazing spheres, be of no importance to us? Especially in its return from the sun? When that immense body is (according to Sir Isaac Newton's calculation) heated two thousand times hotter than a red-hot cannon ball. The late ingenious and accurate Dr. Halley

Halley (never yet suspected of enthusiasm) fixes the return of the great comet in the year one thousand seven hundred and fifty eight: and he observes that the last time it revolved, it moved in the very same line which the earth describes in her annual course round the sun: but the earth was on the other side of her orbit. Whereas in this revolution it will move not only in the same line, but in the same part of that line wherein the earth moves. And "who can can tell (says that great man) what the consequences of such a contact may be?"

"Who can tell?" Any man of common understanding, who knows the very first elements of astronomy. The immediate consequence of such a body of solid fire touching the earth, must necessarily be, that it will set the earth on fire, and burn it to a coal, if it do not likewise strike it out of its course; in which case (so far as we can judge) it must drop down directly into the sun.

But what if this vast body is already on its way? If it is nearer than we are aware of? What if these unusual, unprecedented motions of the waters, be one effect of its near approach? We cannot be certain that it will be visible to the inhabitants of our globe, till it has imbibed the solar fire. But possibly we may see it sooner than we desire. We may see it, not as Milton speaks, "From its horrid hair shake pestilence and war:" but ushering in far other calamities than these, and of more extensive influence. Probably it will be seen first, drawing nearer and nearer, till it appears as another moon in magnitude, though not in colour, being of a deep fiery red: then scorching and burning up all the produce of the earth, drying away all clouds, and so cutting off the hope or possibility of any rain or dew; drying up every fountain, stream, and river, causing all faces to gather blackness, and all men's hearts to fail. Then executing its grand commission on the globe itself, and causing the stars to fall from heaven.* O who

* What security is there against all this, upon the *Infidel* hypothesis? But upon the *Christian*, there is abundant security; for the Scripture prophecies are not yet fulfilled.

may abide when this is done? Who will then be able to stand?

Quum mare, quum tellus, operosa regia cœli
Ardeat, et mundi moles operosa laboret?

What shall we do? Do now, that none of these things may come upon us unawares? We are wisely and diligently providing for our defence against one enemy: with such a watchful wisdom and active diligence, as is a comfort to every honest Englishman. But why should we not shew the same wisdom and diligence in providing against all our enemies? And if our own wisdom and strength be sufficient to defend us, let us not seek any further. Let us without delay recruit our forces and guard our coasts against the famine, and murrain, and pestilence; and still more carefully against immoderate rains, and winds, and lightnings, and earthquakes, and comets: that we may no longer be under any painful apprehensions of any present or future danger, but may smile

"Secure amidst the jar of elements,
The wreck of matter, and the crush of worlds!"

But if our own wisdom and strength be not sufficient to defend us, let us not be ashamed to seek farther help. Let us even dare to own, we believe there is a God: nay, and not a lazy, indolent, epicurean deity, who sits at ease upon the circle of the heavens, and neither knows nor cares what is done below: but one, who as he created heaven and earth, and all the armies of them, as he sustains them all by the word of his power, so cannot neglect the work of his own hands. With pleasure we own there is such a God, whose eye pervades the whole sphere of created beings, who knoweth the number of the stars, and calleth them all by their names: a God, whose wisdom is as the great abyss, deep and wide as eternity:

"Who high in power, in the beginning said,
Let sea, and air, and earth, and heaven be made,
And it was so. And when he shall ordain
In other sort, hath but to speak again,
And they shall be no more."

Yet more: whose mercy riseth above the heavens, and his faithfulness above the clouds; who is loving to every man, and his mercy over all his works: let us secure him on our side. Let us make this wise, this powerful, this gracious God our friend! Then need we not fear, though the earth be moved, and the hills be carried into the midst of the sea: no, not though the heavens being on fire are dissolved, and the very elements melt with fervent heat. It is enough that the Lord of hosts is with us, the God of love is our everlasting refuge.

But how shall we secure the favour of this great God? How, but by worshipping him in spirit and in truth: by uniformly imitating him we worship, in all his imitable perfections; without which the most accurate systems of opinions, all external modes of religion, are idle cobwebs of the brain, dull farce and empty show. Now God is love. Love God then, and you are a true worshipper. Love mankind, and God is your God, your Father, and your Friend. But see that you deceive not your own soul; for this is not a point of small importance. And by this you may know; if you love God, then you are happy in God. If you love God, riches, honours, and the pleasures of sense, are no more to you than bubbles on the water: you look on dress and equipage as the tassels of a fool's cap, diversions, as the bells on a fool's coat. If you love God, God is in all your thoughts, and your whole life is a sacrifice to him. And if you love mankind, it is your one design, desire, and endeavour to spread virtue and happiness all around you: to lessen the present sorrows, and increase the joys of every child of man: and if it be possible, to bring them with you to the rivers of pleasure that are at God's right-hand for evermore.

But where shall you find one who answers this happy and amiable character? Wherever you find a Christian: for this and this alone is real, genuine Christianity. Surely you did not imagine, that Christianity was no more than such a system of *opinions* as is vulgarly called *faith*? Or a strict and regular attendance on any kind of *external worship*?

O no! Were this all that it implied, Christianity were, indeed, a poor, empty, shallow thing: such as none but half-thinkers could admire, and all who think freely and generously must despise. But this is not the case: the spirit above described, this alone, is Christianity. And if so, it is no wonder, that even a celebrated unbeliever should make that frank declaration, "Well, after all, these Christian dogs, are the happiest fellows upon earth!" Indeed they are. Nay, we may say more. They are the only happy men upon earth: and that though we should have no regard at all to the particular circumstances above-mentioned. Suppose there were no such thing as a comet in the universe, or none that would ever approach the solar system; suppose there had never been an earthquake in the world, or that we were assured there never would be another: yet what advantage has a Christian (I mean always a real, scriptural Christian) above all other men upon earth?

What advantage has he over *you* in particular, if you do not believe the Christian system? For suppose you have utterly driven away storms, lightnings, earthquakes, comets, yet there is another grim enemy at the door; and you cannot drive him away, it is death. "O *that death* (said a gentleman of large possessions, of good health, and a cheerful natural temper) I do not love to think on it! it comes in and spoils all." So it does indeed. It comes with its "miscreated front," and spoils all your mirth, diversions, pleasures! It turns all into the silence of a tomb, into rottenness and dust. And many times it will not stay, till the trembling hand of old age beckons to it: but it leaps upon you, while you are in the dawn of life, in the bloom and strength of your years.

"The morning flowers display their sweets,
And gay their silken leaves unfold,
Unmindful of the noon-tide heats,
And fearless of the evening cold.
Nipp'd by the wind's unkindly blast,
Parch'd by the sun's directer ray,

The momentary glories waste,
The short-liv'd beauties die away."

And where are you then? Does your soul disperse and dissolve into common air? Or does it share the fate of its former companion, and moulder into dust? Or does it remain conscious of its own existence, in some distant, unknown world? It is all unknown! A black, dreary, melancholy scene! Clouds and darkness rest upon it.

But the case is far otherwise with a Christian. To him life and immortality are brought to light. His eye pierces through the vale of the shadow of death, and sees into the glories of eternity. His view doth not terminate on that black line, "The verge 'twixt mortal and immortal being," but extends beyond the bounds of time and place, to the "house of God eternal in the heavens." Hence he is so far from looking upon death as an enemy, that he longs to feel his welcome embrace. He groans (but they are pleasing groans) to have mortality swallowed up of life.

Perhaps you will say, "But this is all a dream. He is only in a fool's paradise?" Supposing he be, it is a pleasing dream. *Maneat mentis gratissimus error!* If he is only in a fool's paradise, yet it is a paradise, while you are wandering in a wide, weary, barren world. Be it folly: his folly gives him that present happiness, which all your wisdom cannot find. So that he may now turn tables upon you and say,

"Whoe'er can ease by folly get,
With safety may despise
The wretched, unenjoying wit,
The miserable wise."

Such unspeakable advantage (even if there is none beyond death) has a Christian over an Infidel! It is true, he has given up some pleasures before he could attain to this. But what pleasures? That of eating till he is sick: till he weakens a strong, or quite destroys a weak constitution. He has given up the pleasure of drinking a man into a beast, and that of ranging from one worthless creature to another, till he brings a canker upon his estate, and perhaps

rottenness into his bones. But in lieu of these, he has now (whatever may be hereafter) a continual serenity of mind, a constant evenness and composure of temper, a peace which passeth all understanding. He has learned in every state wherein he is, therewith to be content: nay, to give thanks, as being clearly persuaded, it is better for him than any other. He feels continual gratitude to his Supreme Benefactor, Father of Spirits, Parent of Good: and tender, disinterested benevolence to all the children of this common Father. May the Father of *your* spirit, and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, make *you* such a Christian! May he work in *your* soul a divine conviction of things not discerned by eyes of flesh and blood! May he give you to see him that is invisible, and to taste of the powers of the world to come; may he fill you with all peace and joy in believing, that you may be happy in life, in death, in eternity!

THE

PRINCIPLES

OF A

METHODIST,

OCCASIONED BY A PAMPHLET INTITLED, " A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE PRINCIPLES OF METHODISM."

TO THE READER.

1. I HAVE often written on controverted points before; but not with an eye to any particular person. So that this is the first time that I have appeared in controversy, properly so called. Indeed I have not wanted occasion to do it before. Particularly when, after many stabs in the dark, I was publickly attacked, not by an open enemy, but by *my own familiar friend.* But I could not answer him. I could only cover my face and say, Και συ εν εκεινων: Και συ, τεκνον. Art thou also among them? Art thou, my son?

2. I now tread an untried path with fear and trembling: fear, not of my adversary, but of myself. I fear my own spirit, lest I " fall, where many mightier have been slain." I never knew one man (or but one) write controversy, with what I thought a right spirit. Every disputant seems to think, (as every soldier) that he may hurt his opponent as much as he can; nay, that he ought to do his worst to him, or he cannot make the best of his own cause: that, so he do not belie or wilfully misrepresent him, he must expose him as far as he is able. It is enough, we suppose, if we do not shew heat or passion against our adversary. But, not to despise him, or endeavour to make others do so, is quite a work of supererogation.

3. But ought these things to be so? (I speak on the

Christian scheme:) Ought we not to love our neighbour as ourselves? And does a man cease to be our neighbour, because he is of a different opinion? Nay, and declares himself so to be? Ought we not, for all this, to do to him, as we would he should do to us? But do we ourselves love to be exposed, or set in the worst light? Would we willingly be treated with contempt? If not, why do we treat others thus? And yet, who scruples it? Who does not hit every blow he can, however foreign to the merits of the cause? Who, in controversy, casts the mantle of love over the nakedness of his brother? Who keeps steadily and uniformly to the question, without ever striking at the person? Who shews in every sentence, that he loves his brother, only less than the truth?

4. I have made a little faint essay toward this. I have a brother, who is as my own soul. My desire is, in every word I say, to look upon Mr. Tucker as in his place, and to speak no tittle concerning the one, in any other spirit than I would speak concerning the other. But whether I have attained this or not, I know not; for my heart is deceitful, and desperately wicked. If I have spoken any thing in another spirit, I pray God it may not be laid to my charge; and that it may not condemn me in that day, when the secrets of all hearts shall be made manifest! Meanwhile, my heart's desire and prayer to God is, that both I, and all who think it their duty to oppose me, may put on bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven us.

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1. THERE has lately appeared in the world, a Tract intitled, *A brief History of the Principles of Methodism.* I doubt not but the writer's design was good, and believe he has a real desire to know the truth. And the manner wherein he pursues that design is, generally, calm and dispassionate. He is indeed in several mistakes; but as many

of these are either of small consequence in themselves, or do not immediately relate to me, it is not my concern to mention them. All of any consequence which relates to me, I think falls under three heads:

First, That I believe Justification by Faith alone.

Secondly, That I believe Sinless Perfection; and,

Thirdly, That I believe Inconsistencies.—Of each of these, I will speak as plainly as I can.

2. First, That I believe Justification by Faith alone. This I allow: for I am firmly persuaded, "That every man of the offspring of Adam is very far gone from original righteousness, and is, of his own nature, inclined to evil:" That this corruption of our nature, in every person born into the world, deserves God's wrath and damnation: that therefore if ever we receive the remission of our sins, and are accounted righteous before God, it must be only for the merits of Christ, by faith, and not for our own works or deservings of any kind. Nay, I am persuaded, That all works done before Justification, have in them the nature of sin; and that, consequently, till he is justified, a man has no power to do any work, which is pleasing and acceptable to God.

3. To express my meaning a little more at large.

I believe, Three things must go together in our Justification: upon God's part, his great mercy and grace; upon Christ's part, the satisfaction of God's Justice, by the offering his body, and shedding his blood, and fulfilling the law of God perfectly; and upon our part, true and living faith in the merits of Jesus Christ. So that in our Justification there is not only God's mercy and grace, but his justice also. And so the grace of God does not shut out the righteousness of God in our Justification, but only shuts out the righteousness of man, that is, the righteousness of our works.

4. And therefore St. Paul requires nothing on the part of man, but only a true and living Faith. Yet this Faith does not shut out Repentance, Hope, and Love, which are joined with Faith in every man that is justified. But it

shuts them out from the office of justifying. So that although they are all present together in him that is justified, yet they justify not altogether.

5. Neither does Faith shut out good works, necessarily to be done afterwards. But we may not do them to this intent, To be justified by doing them. Our Justification comes freely, of the mere mercy of God. For whereas all the world was not able to pay any part towards their ransom, it pleased him, without any of our deserving, to prepare for us Christ's body and blood, whereby our ransom might be paid, his law fulfilled, and his justice satisfied. Christ therefore is now the righteousness of all them that truly believe in him. He for them paid the ransom by his death. He for them fulfilled the law in his life. So that now in Him, and by Him, every Believer may be called a fulfiller of the law.

6. But let it be observed, the true sense of those words, "We are justified by faith in Christ only," is not, that this our own act, To believe in Christ, or this our Faith which is within us, justifies us (for that were, to account ourselves to be justified by some act or virtue that is within us:) but that although we have faith, hope, and love within us, and do ever so many good works, yet we must renounce the merit of all, of faith, hope, love, and all other virtues and good works, which we either have done, shall do, or can do, as far too weak to deserve our justification: for which therefore we must trust only in God's mercy, and the merits of Christ. For it is he alone that taketh away our sins. To Him alone are we to go for this; forsaking all our virtues, good words, thoughts, and works, and putting our trust in Christ only.

7. In strictness, therefore, neither our faith nor our works justify us, i. e. deserve the remission of our sins. But God himself justifies us, of his own mercy, through the merits of his Son only. Nevertheless, because by Faith we embrace the promise of God's mercy, and of the remission of our sins, therefore the Scripture says, That faith does justify, yea, faith without works. And it is all one

to say, faith without works, and faith alone justifies us, therefore the ancient Fathers from time to time speak thus: faith alone justifies us. And because we receive Faith through the only merits of Christ, and not through the merit of any virtue we have, or work we do: therefore in that respect we renounce, as it were, again, faith, works, and all other virtues. For our corruption through Original Sin is so great, that all our faith, charity, words, and works, cannot merit or deserve any part of our justification for us. And therefore we thus speak, humbling ourselves before God, and giving Christ all the glory of our justification.

8. But it should also be observed, What that Faith is, whereby we are justified. Now that faith which brings not forth good works, is not a living Faith, but a dead and devilish one. For even the devils believe, "That Christ was born of a Virgin, that he wrought all kind of miracles, declaring himself to be very God, that for our sakes He died and rose again, and ascended into heaven, and at the end of the world shall come again, to judge the quick and the dead." This the devils believe, and so they believe all that is written in the Old and New Testament. And yet still, for all this Faith, they are but devils. They remain still in their damnable estate, lacking the true Christian Faith.

9. The true Christian Faith is, not only to believe the Holy Scriptures and the articles of our Faith are true, but also to have a sure trust and confidence to be saved from everlasting damnation by Christ, whereof doth follow a loving heart, to obey his commandments. And this Faith neither any devil hath, nor any wicked man. No ungodly man hath or can have this sure trust and confidence in God, that by the merits of Christ his sins are forgiven, and he reconciled to the favour of God.

10. This is what I believe (and have believed for some years) concerning Justification by faith alone. I have chosen to express it in the words of a little treatise published several years ago, as being the most authentic proof, both

of my past and present sentiments. If I err herein, let those who are better informed calmly point out my error to me: and I trust I shall not shut my eyes against the light, from whatsoever side it comes.

11. The second thing laid to my charge is, That I believe sinless Perfection. I will simply declare what I do believe concerning this also, and leave unprejudiced men to judge.

12. My last and most deliberate thoughts on this head were published a few years since, in these words:

1. "Perhaps the general prejudice against Christian Perfection may chiefly arise from a misapprehension of the nature of it. We willingly allow, and continually declare, there is no such perfection in this life, as implies either a dispensation from doing good, and attending all the ordinances of God; or a freedom from ignorance, mistake, temptation, and a thousand infirmities necessarily connected with flesh and blood.

2. "First, We not only allow, but earnestly contend, (as for the faith once delivered to the saints,) that there is no such perfection in this life, as implies any dispensation from attending all the ordinances of God, or from doing good unto all men, while we have time, though especially unto the household of faith. And whosoever they are, who have taught otherwise, we are convinced are not taught of God. We dare not receive them, neither bid them God speed, lest we be partakers of their evil deeds. We believe that not only the babes in Christ, who have newly found redemption in his blood, but those also, who are grown up unto perfect men, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ, are indispensibly obliged, (and that they are obliged thereto, is their glory and crown of rejoicing) as oft as they have opportunity, to eat bread and drink wine, in remembrance of him; to search the Scriptures; by fasting (as well as temperance) to keep their bodies under, and bring them into subjection; and, above all, to pour out their souls in prayer, both secretly, and in the great congregation.

3. "We secondly believe, and therefore speak, and that

unto all men, and with much assurance, that there is no such perfection in this life, as implies an entire deliverance, either from ignorance or mistake, in things not essential to salvation, or salvation from manifold temptations, or from numberless infirmities, wherewith the corruptible body more or less presses down the soul. This is the same thing which we have spoken from the beginning: if any teach otherwise, they are not of us. We cannot find any ground in Scripture to suppose, that any inhabitant of an house of clay is wholly exempt either from bodily infirmities, or from ignorance of many things; or to imagine any mere man is incapable of mistake, or of falling into divers temptations: no: the disciple is not above his Master, nor the servant above his Lord. It is enough, that every one, who is perfect, shall be as his Master.

4. "But what then, it may be asked, do you mean by one that is perfect, or one that is as his Master?" We mean, one in whom is the mind which was in Christ, and who so walketh, as he also walked; a man that hath clean hands and a pure heart; or that is cleansed from all filthiness of flesh and spirit; one in whom there is no occasion of stumbling, and who accordingly doth not commit sin. To declare this a little more particularly: we understand by that scriptural expression, a perfect man, one in whom God hath fulfilled his faithful word, "From all your filthiness, and from all your idols will I cleanse you.—I will also save you from all your uncleannesses." We understand thereby one whom God hath sanctified throughout, even in body, soul, and spirit; one who walketh in the light, as he is in the light, in whom is no darkness at all; the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, having cleansed him from all sin."

5. "This man can now testify to all mankind, I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me. He is holy, as God who hath called him is holy, both in heart, and in all manner of conversation. He loveth the Lord his God with all his heart, and serveth him with all his strength. He loveth his neighbour (every man) as himself; yea, as Christ

loved us: them in particular, that despitefully use him and persecute him, because they know not the Son, neither the Father. Indeed his soul is all love, filled with bowels of mercies, kindness, meekness, gentleness, long-suffering. And his life agreeth thereto, full of the work of faith, the patience of hope, the labour of love. And whatsoever he doth, either in word or deed, he doth it all in the name, in the love and power of the Lord Jesus. In a word, he doth the will of God on earth, as it is done in heaven.

6. "This it is to be a perfect man, to be sanctified throughout, created anew in Christ Jesus: even to have a heart so all flaming with the love of God, (to use Archbishop Usher's words) as continually to offer up every thought, word, and work, as a spiritual sacrifice, acceptable unto God through Christ. In every thought of our hearts, in every work of our hands, to show forth his praise, who hath called us out of darkness, into his marvellous light. O that both we, and all who seek the Lord Jesus in sincerity, may thus be made perfect in one!"

13. If there be any thing unscriptural in these words, any thing wild or extravagant, any thing contrary to the analogy of faith, or the experience of adult christians, let them smite me friendly and reprove me; let them impart to me of the clearer light God has given them. How knowest thou, O man, but thou mayest gain thy brother? But he may at length come to the knowledge of the truth? And thy labour of love, shewn forth with meekness of wisdom, may not be in vain?

14. There remains yet another charge against me. That I believe Inconsistencies: that my tenets, particularly concerning Justification, are contradictory to themselves: that Mr. Wesley, "since his return from Germany, has improved in the spirit of inconsistency. For then he published two treatises of Dr. Barnes's the calvinist, or dominican rather, who suffered in 1541;" [Let us spare the ashes of the dead. Were I such a dominican as he was, I should rejoice too to die in the flames!] "the first on 'Justification by faith only,

the other on The sinfulness of man's natural will, and his utter inability to do works acceptable to God, until he be justified. Which principles, if added to his former tenets" (nay, they need not be added to them, for they are the very same;) "will give the whole a new vein of inconsistency, and make the contradictions more gross and glaring than before."

15. It will be necessary to speak more largely on this head, than on either of the preceding. And in order to speak as distinctly as I can, I propose taking the paragraphs one by one, as they lie before me.

16. [1.] It is asserted that Mr. Law's system was the "creed of the Methodists:" But it is not proved. I had been eight years at Oxford, before I read any of Mr. Law's writings: and when I did, I was so far from making them my creed, that I had objections to almost every page. But all this time my manner was, to spend several hours a day, in reading the scripture in the original tongues. And hence my system (so termed) was wholly drawn according to the light I then had.

17. It was in my passage to Georgia, I met with those Moravian teachers, who would have taught me the way of God more perfectly. But I understood them not. Neither on my arrival there, did they infuse any particularities into me, either about justification, or any thing else. For I came back with the same notions I went. And this I have explicitly acknowledged in my second journal, where some of my words are these: "When Peter Bohler, as soon as I came to London, affirmed of true faith in Christ, (which is but one) that it had these two fruits inseparably attending it, "dominion over sin, and constant peace from a sense of forgiveness:" I was quite amazed, and looked upon it as a new gospel. If this were so, it was clear I had no faith. But I was not willing to be convinced of this: therefore I disputed with all my might, and laboured to prove that faith might be where these were not; especially where that sense of forgiveness was not: for all the scriptures relating to this, I had been long since taught to construe away, and

to call all presbyterians who spoke otherwise. Besides, I well saw, no one could, (in the nature of things) have such a sense of forgiveness, and not feel it. But I felt it not. If then there was no faith without this, all my pretensions to faith dropped at once.

18. [2] Yet it was not Peter Bohler who convinced me that conversion (I mean justification) was an instantaneous work. On the contrary, when I was convinced of the nature and fruits of justifying faith, still "I could not comprehend what he spoke of an instantaneous work. I could not understand how this faith should be given in a moment: how a man could at once be thus turned from darkness to light, from sin and misery to righteousness and joy in the Holy Ghost. I searched the Scriptures again, touching this very thing, particularly the Acts of the Apostles. But to my utter astonishment, I found scarce any instances there of other than instantaneous conversions: scarce any other so slow as that of Saint Paul, who was three days in the pangs of the new-birth. I had but one retreat left; viz. "Thus, I grant, God wrought in the first ages of christianity: but the times are changed. What reason have I to believe, He works in the same manner now?"

"But on Sunday 22, I was beat out of this retreat too, by the concurring evidence of several living witnesses, who testified God had thus wrought in themselves: giving them in a moment, such a faith in the blood of his Son, as translated them out of darkness into light, out of sin and fear into holiness and happiness. Here ended my disputing. I could now only cry out, "Lord, help thou my unbelief." —The remaining part of this section, with the third and fourth, contain my own words; to which I still subscribe.

And if there is a mistake in the fifth, it is not material.

19. [6.] It is true that "on Wednesday, July 12, the Count spoke to this effect:

1. Justification is the forgiveness of sins:
2. The moment a man flies to Christ, he is justified:
3. And has peace with God, but not always joy:

4. Nor perhaps may he know he is justified, till long after:

5. For the assurance of it is distinct from justification itself:

6. But others may know he is justified, by his power over sin, by his seriousness, his love of the brethren, and his hunger and thirst after righteousness, which alone proves the spiritual life to be begun.

7. To be justified is the same thing as to be born of God: when a man is awakened, he is begotten of God, and his fear, and sorrow, and sense of the wrath of God, are the pangs of the new birth."

20. It is true also, that I then recollected what Peter Bohler had often said on this head, which was to this effect:

1. When a man has living faith in Christ, then he is justified;

2. This is always given in a moment:

3. And in that moment he has peace with God:

4. Which he cannot have, without knowing that he has it:

5. And, being born of God, he sinneth not:

6. Which deliverance from sin he cannot have without knowing that he has it.

21. I did not apprehend it possible, for any man living to have imagined, that I believed *both these accounts;* the words whereof I had purposely so ranged and divided into short sentences, that the gross, irreconcileable difference between them, might be plain to the meanest reader. I cannot therefore but be a little surprised at the strength of that prejudice, which could prevent any one's seeing, that in opposition to the Count's opinion (which in many respects I wholly disapproved of) I quoted the words of one of his own church, which, if true, overturn it altogether.

22. I have nothing to object to the quotations made in the seventh, eighth, and ninth Sections. In the tenth are these words: "Now since Mr. Wesley went so far, to gather such materials together, let us see what was the

system (or rather the *Medley*) of principles he had to return with to England."

Of the Assurance of Justification.

I believe that Conversion is an instantaneous work. And that the moment a man is converted, or has living faith in Christ, he is justified. Which faith a man cannot have, without knowing that he hath it.

Yet I believe he may not know that he is justified, (i. e. that he has living faith) 'till a long time after.

I believe, also, that the moment a man is justified, he has peace with God.

Which he cannot have without knowing that he has it.

Yet I believe he may not know that he is justified, (i. e. that he has peace with God) 'till a long time after.

I believe when a man is justified, he is born of God.

And being born of God, he sinneth not.

Which deliverance from sin he cannot have without knowing it.

Yet I believe he may not know that he is justified, (i. e. delivered from sin) till a long time after. Though I believe that others may know that he is justified by his power over sin, his seriousness, and love of the brethren.

23. "Of the Conditions of Justification.

I believe that Christ *formed in us* subordinately to Christ *given for us*, (i. e. our own inherent Righteousness subordinate to Christ's Merits) ought to be insisted upon, as necessary to our Justification.

And it is just and right that a man should be humble and penitent, and have a broken and contrite heart (i. e. should have Christ *formed in him*) before he can expect to be justified.

And that this penitence and contrition is the work of the Holy Ghost."

"Yet I believe that all this is nothing towards, and has no influence on our Justification.

Again, I believe that in order to Justification, I must go straight to Christ with all my ungodliness, and plead nothing else.

Yet I believe that we should not insist upon any thing we *do* or *feel*, as it were necessarily *previous* to Justification."

24. "Of the Effects of Justification.

I believe that Justification is the same thing as to be born of God. Yet a man may have a *strong assurance* that he is justified, and not be able to affirm, that he is born of God.

A man may be fully assured that his sins are forgiven, yet may not be able to tell the hour or day when he received this full assurance, because it may grow up in him by degrees.—Though he can remember, that from the time this full assurance was confirmed in him, he never lost it, no, not for a moment.

A man may have a weak faith at the same time that he hath peace with God, *not one uneasy thought;* and freedom from sin, *not one unholy desire.*"

"A man may be justified (i.e. born of God) who has not a clean heart (i.e. is not sanctified.)

He may be justified (i. e. born of God) and not have the Indwelling of the Spirit."

25. I entirely agree, "That the foregoing creed is a very *extraordinary and odd composition.*" But it is not mine. I neither composed it, nor believe it: as I doubt not every impartial reader will be fully convinced, when we shall have gone over it, once more step by step.

The parts which I do believe I shall barely repeat: on the others it will be needful to add a few words.

Of the Assurance of Justification.

"I believe that conversion (meaning thereby Justification) is an instantaneous work; and that the moment a man has living faith in Christ, he is converted or justified. (So the proposition must be expressed to make it sense.) Which faith he cannot have, without knowing that he has it."

"Yet I believe, he may not know that he has it till long after." This I deny: I believe no such thing.

"I believe the moment a man is justified, he hath peace with God:

"Which he cannot have, without knowing that he has it."

"Yet I believe, he may not know that he has it till long after." This again I deny. I believe it not. Nor Michael Linner neither. To clear whom entirely, one need only read his own words.

"About fourteen years ago, I was more than ever convinced, that I was wholly different from what God required me to be. I consulted his word again and again; but it spoke nothing but condemnation; till at last I could not read, nor indeed do any thing else, having no hope and no spirit left in me. I had been in this state for several days, when being musing by myself, those words came strongly into my mind, 'God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, to the end that all who believe in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.' I thought, *all?* Then I am one. Then he is given for me. But I am a sinner. And he came to save sinners. Immediately my burden dropped off, and my heart was at rest.

"But the full assurance of faith I had not yet, nor for the two years I continued in Moravia. When I was driven out thence by the Jesuits, I retired hither, and was, soon after, received into the church. And here, after some time, it pleased our Lord to manifest himself more clearly to my soul; and give me that full sense of my acceptance in him, which excludes all doubt and fear.

"Indeed the leading of the Spirit are different in different souls. His more usual method, I believe, is to give in one and the same moment, forgiveness of sins, and a full assurance of that forgiveness. Yet in many he works as he did in me: giving first the remission of sins, and, after some weeks, or months, or years, the full assurance of it."*

All I need observe is, that the *first sense of forgiveness* is often mixed with doubt or fear, as the very term implies.

Therefore, instead of "he may not know that he has peace with God till long after," it should be, (to agree

* Vol. I. Page 310.

with Michael Linner's words,) "he may not have, till long after, that full assurance of faith, which excludes all doubt and fear."

"I believe, to be justified is the same as to be born of God.

"And he that is born of God, sinneth not.

"Which deliverance from sin he cannot have, without knowing that he has it."

"Yet I believe he may not know it till long after." This also I utterly deny.

26. Of the Conditions of Justification.

1. "I believe that *Christ formed in us*, ought to be insisted on, as necessary to our justification."

I no more believe this, than Christian David does, whose words concerning it are these:

"It pleased God to shew me, that Christ in us, and Christ for us, ought to be both insisted on:"

But I clearly saw, *we ought not to insist* on any thing *we feel*, any more than any thing we do, as if it were *necessarily* previous to our justification.

"And before a man can expect to be justified, he should be humble and penitent, and have a broken and contrite heart; that is, should have *Christ formed in him.*" No; that is quite another thing. I believe every man is penitent, before he is justified; he repents, before he believes the gospel. But it is never *before* he is justified that Christ is *formed in him.*

"And that this penitence and contrition is the work of the Holy Ghost."

"Yet I believe that all this is nothing towards, and has no influence on our justification."

Christian David's words are, "Observe, this is not the foundation. It is not this by which (for the sake of which) you are justified. This is not the righteousness, this is no part of the righteousness, by which you are reconciled to God. You grieve for your sins. You are deeply humbled. Your heart is broken. Well: but all this is nothing to your justification." The words immediately following fix

the sense of this otherwise exceptionable sentence; "The remission of your sins is not owing to this cause, either in whole or in part. Your humiliation has no influence on that." Not *as a cause;* so the very last words explain it.

"Again, I believe, that in order to obtain justification, I must go straight to Christ, with all my ungodliness, and plead nothing else."

"Yet I believe, we should not insist upon any thing we do or feel, as if it were necessarily previous to justification." No, nor any thing else. So the whole tenor of Christian David's words implies.

Of the Effects of Justification.

27. "I believe a man may have a strong assurance he is justified, and not be able to affirm he is a child of God."

Feder's words are these: "I found my heart at rest, in good hope that my sins were forgiven; of which I had a strong assurance six weeks after." True, *comparatively stronger*, though still mixed with doubt and fear. "But I dare not affirm I am a child of God." I see no inconsistency in all this. Many such instances I know at this day. I myself was one for some time.

"A man may be fully assured that his sins are forgiven, yet may not be able to tell the day when he received this full assurance; because it grew up in him." (Of this also I know a few other instances.) "But from the time this full assurance was confirmed in him, he never lost it." Very true, and, I think, consistent.

Neusser's own words are, "In him I found true rest to my soul, being fully assured, that all my sins were forgiven. Yet I cannot tell the hour or day, when I first received that full assurance. For it was not given me at first, neither at once;" (not in its fulness) "but grew up in me by degrees. And from the time it was confirmed in me, I have never lost it, having never since doubted, no, not for a moment."

"A man may have a weak faith, at the same time that he has peace with God, and no unholy desires.

"A man may be justified, who has not a clean heart."

28. [11.] Not in the full sense of the word. This I do

verily believe is sound divinity, agreeable both to Scripture and experience. And I believe it is consistent with itself. As to the "hundred other absurdities which might be fully and fairly made out," it will be time enough to consider them when they are produced.

29. [12, 13.] But whether I have succeeded in attempting to reconcile these things or no, I verily think Mr. Tucker has. I desire not a more consistent account of my principles, than he has himself given in the following words:

"Our spiritual state should be considered, and distinctly, under each of these views.

1. "Before justification; in which state we may be said to be unable to do any thing acceptable to God: because then we can do nothing but come to Christ: which ought not to be considered as doing any thing, but as supplicating (or waiting) to receive a power of doing for the time to come."

"For the preventing grace of God, which is common to all, is sufficient to bring us to Christ; though it is not sufficient to carry us any further, till we are justified."

2. "After Justification. The moment a man comes to Christ (by faith) he is justified, and born again; that is, he is born again in the imperfect sense (for there are two [if not more] degrees of regeneration.) And he has power over all the stirrings and motions of sin, but not a total freedom from them. Therefore he hath not yet, in the full and proper sense, a new and clean heart. But being exposed to various temptations, he may, and will fall again from this condition, if he doth not attain to a more excellent gift."*

* "Mr. Charles Wesley (the note says) was not persuaded of the truth of the Moravian faith, till some time after his brother's return from Germany." There is a great mistake in this. I returned not from Germany till Saturday, September the 16th. Whereas my brother was fully persuaded of the truth of the Moravian faith (so called) on Wednesday, May 3, preceding. The note adds, "This (i. e. justifying faith) he received but very lately." This also is a mistake. What we believe to be justifying faith he received May 21, 1738. See Vol. I. Page 274.

3. "Sanctification; the last and highest state of perfection in this life. For then are the faithful born again in the full and perfect sense. Then is there given unto them a new clean heart, and the struggle between the old and new man is over."*

30. [14.] That I may say many things which have been said before, and perhaps by Calvin or Arminius, by Montanus or Barclay, or the Archbishop of Cambray, is highly probable. But it cannot thence be inferred, that I hold "a medley of all their principles; Calvanism, Arminianism, Montanism, Quakerism, Quietism, all thrown together." There might as well have been added, Judaism, Mahometanism, Paganism. It would have made the period rounder, and been full as easily proved, I mean asserted; for other proof is not yet produced.

31. I pass over the smaller mistakes which occur in the fifteenth and sixteenth paragraphs, together with the prophecy or prognostication, concerning the approaching divisions and downfall of the Methodists. What follows to the end, concerning the ground of our hope, is indeed of greater importance. But we have not as yet the strength of the

* The next note runs thus: Mr. Wesley has such a peculiar turn and tendency towards inconsistencies in his principles, that in his preface to Haliburton's Life, (wrote February 9, 1738-9,) just after his return (from Germany) he contradicts all that he has said elsewhere for this sinless perfection, viz. "But it may be said, The gospel covenant does not promise entire freedom from sin." What do you mean by the word sin? The infection of nature? Or those numberless weaknesses and follies, sometimes (improperly) termed sins of infirmity? If you mean only this, you say most true. We shall not put off these but with our bodies. But if you mean, it does not promise entire freedom from sin, in its proper sense, or from committing sin; this is by no means true, unless the Scripture be false. For thus it is written, "Whosoever is born of God, doth not commit sin." (Unless he lose the Spirit of Adoption, if not finally, yet for a while, as did this child of God) "for his seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." He cannot sin, so long as he "keepeth himself," for then "the wicked one toucheth him not."

The question is not, Whether this be right or wrong: but whether it contradicts any thing I had said elsewhere. Thrice I have spoken expressly on this subject; in a sermon, and in two prefaces. If in any of these I have contradicted what I said before, I will own the former assertion as a mistake.

cause. The dissertation promised is still behind. Therefore as my work is great, and my time short, I wave that dispute for the present. And perhaps when I shall have received farther light, I may be convinced, That "Gospel-holiness (as Mr. Tucker believes) is a necessary qualification antecedent to justification." This appears to me now to be directly opposite to the gospel of Christ. But I will endeavour, impartially to consider, what shall be advanced in defence of it. And may He, who knoweth my simpleness, teach me his way, and give me a right judgment in all things!

END OF VOL. ELEVEN.

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